UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

CONSTRUCTION OF WILDERNESS IN THE FORMATION OF GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, MONTANA

by

CELESTE JOSEPHINE URION

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

IN

HISTORY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND CLASSICS

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

SPRING 1999

National Library of Canada
Acquisitions and Bibliographic Services
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada
Acquisitions et services bibliographiques
395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-40018-2

Canada

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

LIBRARY RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR: Celeste Josephine Urion

TITLE OF THESIS: Construction of Wilderness In the Formation of Glacier National Park, Montana

DEGREE: Master of Arts

YEAR THIS DEGREE GRANTED: 1999

Permission is hereby granted to the University of Alberta Library to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or to sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves all other publication and other rights in association with the copyright in the thesis, and except as hereinbefore provided neither the thesis nor any substantial portion thereof may be printed or otherwise reproduced in any material form whatever without the author's prior written permission

Jo Urion

7703 97th Avenue N.W.
Edmonton, Alberta T6C 2B4

DATE January 29/99

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The following certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *Construction of Wilderness in the Formation of Glacier National Park, Montana*, by Celeste Josephine Urion in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History.

Burton Smith, Ph.D., Supervisor

Susan L. Smith, Ph.D.

Andie Diane Palmer, Ph.D.

DATE January 22/99

ABSTRACT

Relative lack of human agency is a component of the definition of a place as wilderness. This study is an exploration of the changing concept of wilderness as it was used by those who developed, managed, or promoted Glacier National Park, Montana–manifestly created to "preserve" the area as "wilderness"–during the first four decades of this century. The study is based on the historiographical premise that the environment has agency in human action and in the formation of ideas, and that historical analysis of those ideas informs our understanding of past action on the environment. An example of this dynamic is the way in which a Turnerian conception–that interaction with the wilderness "frontier" had formed the American character–figured in the creation and early management of the Park. A summary description of human activity in the Park area through the 1930s is presented, and six popular traveler's reports, published between 1917 and 1936, exemplify changing conceptions of the park as wilderness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank the people who kindly granted permission to use and adapt illustrations for this thesis, or confirmed that the material is in the public domain: Tom Patterson, Division of Publications, U.S. National Park Service; Gerry Daumiller, Montana State Library at Helena; Dr. Daniel L. Gustafson, Department of Biology at Montana State University, Bozeman, whose digital maps are works of art; and Marcia Erickson, Assistant Registrar, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh. I appreciate, as well, permission to use a digital image beautifully scanned by Carol Gerten.

I thank my supervisor Dr. Burton Smith for his guidance and encouragement. By example, he continually reminds me why I chose to study history.

Finally, I thank my mom Greta and my dad, Dr. Carl Urion. Without them, this thesis likely would have gotten the better of me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: Introduction 1

Chapter Two: Historiography 10
Introduction 10
An Introduction to American Environmental History 12
Present-Centeredness 13
The Six Historians Who Shaped a Field 15
The Field At Present: Definitions as Problems 20
Historians of the National Parks and National Park Service 22
Historians and the Concept of Wilderness 26
Glacier National Park 32
Glacier National Park and the Myth of Wilderness 34
Conclusion 34

Chapter Three: "Playgrounds for the People": National Parks and the Wilderness Ideal 36
Introduction 36
A Brief History of Wilderness 37
Pioneers and Wilderness 37
Those Removed From a Wilderness Condition: The Philosophers 39
Romantic Philosophers 39
Transcendentalism 41
"Absolutely American, Absolutely Democratic" *: A Nation's Park* 44
"Democracy is a Forest Product" *or The Nature of Politics* 46
Wilderness Management and the National Park Service 52
Conclusion 59

Chapter Four: A Brief History of Glacier National Park 61
Introduction and Overview 61
Claims to Land Around Glacier, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries 68
European and Euro-American Definition of the Land in the Nineteenth Century 69
Eighteenth Century Exploration and The Early Fur Trade 71
The Nineteenth Century: Trade and Exploration 72
The 1890s: Exploitation and Preservation, Part I 77
Exploitation and Preservation Part II: The 1900s 80
The Park Established 85
Conclusion 92

Chapter Five: "Regaining the Poise": Wilderness and Glacier National Park 94
Introduction 94
Discussion of the Primary Sources 96
"The Wildest Part of America" 100
"A Great Playground" 103

"Woodland Wilderness" 106
The History of Our People 108
Hiking Into Harmony with the Sublime 110
Conclusion 113

Chapter 6: Conclusion 114

Figures 125

References Cited 133
Primary Sources 133
Secondary Sources 134

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park (U.S. National Park Service Map) ..... insert

Figure 2. Albert Bierstadt's *Valley of the Yosemite* 126

Figure 3. Thomas Cole's *Romantic Landscape* 126

Figure 4. First Nations With an Interest in the Glacier National Park Area 127

Figure 5. Indian Land Cessions, Assignments, and Reservations in Nineteenth Century Northwestern Montana 128

Figure 6. Places in Montana Cited in Text 129

Figure 7. Locations of Cited Places in Glacier National Park 130

Chapter One: Introduction

Wilderness is a cultural construct. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the history of national parks, landscapes which many perceive as the last outposts of wild, undeveloped land. However, as the history of Glacier National Park[1], Montana (GNP or Glacier) illustrates, these "wilderness" areas were created out of profoundly human landscapes in order to serve a peculiar need of the dominant Euro-American population for a "wilderness experience." Examining the nature of the wilderness experience, and how it was legitimated and formalized through the National Park Service and specific national parks such as Glacier, demonstrates the historicity of the concept of wilderness. It also illustrates how we have constructed–not preserved–wilderness in our national parks.

As any student of American History can attest, European immigrants to the New World defined wilderness as the place where civilization–white people–were not.[2] People moved ever further west, pushing the line that divided civilization and nature ahead of them, and they called that line the frontier. By the end of the nineteenth century, settlers and immigrants had finally exhausted the free land to which the government and the people laid claim. No longer was there wild, unsettled land, no dynamic between settlement and nature. It was at this time that people began to recognize the unique role the frontier had played in creating the American character and American democracy, a view notably articulated by Frederick Jackson Turner and by novelists such as Owen

---

[1]The U.S. National Park Service's map of modern Glacier National Park is reproduced in Figure 1 (see insert).

[2]See Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967) for the definitive discussion on this issue.

Wister. As the government had a vested interest in preserving that which gave rise to the democratic political person, national parks, as permanent remnants of the frontier, were created.[3] Americans of the early twentieth century were encouraged to experience the wilderness conditions their forebears encountered on the frontier in places like Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Glacier, in order that they too might develop the strength of spirit, mind, and body that many believed were the foundation of the American personality. Interaction with a wild environment became an important, powerful experience for Americans individually and culturally.

Despite the environment's acknowledged importance to historic communities in the United States, only recently has it become a subject of historical inquiry. The environment's role in history is currently being debated by historians, environmentalists, ecologists, anthropologists, and the National Park Service, among many other individuals and groups interested in the dynamic between humans and their environments over time. Part of this widespread interest can be credited to the fact that the state of the environment is currently a popular issue; whether that concern is piqued because of an oil spill in Alaska or because of the competition for a camping spot in Yosemite, the integrity of the earth's ecosystems is becoming increasingly important to many people. For historians, the debate about the historical environment revolves around two main questions, one concrete and the other theoretical. First, what was the environment's role in shaping the culture and history of the people that lived within a given landscape? Second, what is the best way to

---

[3]Many historians argue this point convincingly, including Nash in *Wilderness and the American Mind* (cited above) and William Cronon in "The Trouble With Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," in *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature*, ed. William Cronon, (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1995): 69-90.

investigate that role? While attention has been focused on environmental catastrophe–the Dust Bowl of the Great Depression and the buffalo hunts of the nineteenth century, for example–the ways in which people interacted with their environment on a daily basis have not been explored in detail. Only lately have historians such as William Cronon begun looking at the everyday, ordinary ways people modified, and in turn were themselves modified, by their environment.[4]

One of the main questions underlying the discipline of environmental history concerns the degree of involvement the environment has had in influencing a culture's history. There are two extremes to this question–does the environment take an active role in history by transforming the culture that lives within it, or is the landscape merely the passive recipient of human influence? While scholars agree that landscapes have shaped culture and history, there has been surprisingly little reflection on the way the environment has been approached and integrated into historical research. In response to the absence of this type of dialogue, environmental historians have declared that it is time for scholars to evaluate the theories that underlie environmental history.[5]

---

[4]An example of this approach can be found in the essay "Kennecot Journey: The Paths Out of Town" by William Cronon. The author argues that environmental history is about asking big questions and coming up with small answers: in order to determine the relationship between a population and its environment, we should start by looking at the details of individuals' interactions with their environment which provides a perspective of what was occurring at local, regional, and even national levels. In this article, the author examines the history of a small town in Alaska, connecting the development and eventual decline of the local community to regional and national events. See "Kennecot Journey: The Paths Out of Town," in *Under An Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past*, eds. William Cronon, George Miles and Jay Gitlin (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1992): 28-51.

[5]Carolyn Merchant, "Ecological Revolutions," in *Major Problems in American Environmental History: Documents and Essays*, ed. Carolyn Merchant (Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company, 1993): 22.

One of the theories to which these historians refer revolves around the definition of wilderness. The historical definition of wilderness bears directly on how historians have incorporated ideas about the environment into their studies. In accordance with its nineteenth century meaning, historians, most prominently Frederick Jackson Turner, wrote histories describing Euro-American settlement of the frontier wilderness as a Culture vs. Nature scenario.[6] The history of America, specifically western America, was reduced to the story of human (culture, or white America) conflict with non-human elements (nature, and because they were not cultured in the same way as white Americans, Native people). The legitimacy of Turner's thesis was challenged during the 1930s, but his interpretation of western history as the story of conflict between white settlers and the wilderness, of cowboys against Indians, had a lot of popular appeal. It has endured as a fixed notion in peoples' minds.[7] However, this view of history has been changing. In what is being called "New Western History," historians have begun to approach Western history as the history of competing groups of unequal power.[8] These groups–men, women, Natives, Chinese, immigrants, Native-born–competed for resources: water, land, timber, beaver. These are

---

[6]Richard White discusses the connection between Turner, emerging theories of environmental history, and national parks in "The New Western History and the National Parks," *The George Wright Forum* 13, no. 3 (1996): 29-36.

[7]Ken Burns' 1996 PBS documentary, rather ambitiously entitled "The West," perpetuated this view by concentrating on the traditional theme of the westward march of European Americans and Civilization (see *The West, General Motors Mark of Excellence Production,* prod. Ken Burns, dir. Steven Ives, Public Broadcasting System and Florentine Productions, September, 1996). Kevin Costner's 1990 film *Dances With Wolves* also demonstrates how entrenched in popular culture the mythic themes of Turner's West still are (see *Dances With Wolves*, prod. and dir. Kevin Costner, 232 min., Orion Films, 1990.). The story tells us that only by removing himself from the constraints of eastern civilization and "turning Native" on the western frontier can Lt. Dunbar discover the heroic and democratic principles within himself.

[8]See White, "New Western History."

all elements of "wilderness," and the way each different group of people thought about the other determined their reactions to each other.

Since early inhabitants and settlers out of necessity paid a great deal of attention to the environment, the land, to varying degrees, has been a traditional object of historical inquiry in the West. The Homestead Acts, the Dust Bowl, the great buffalo hunts, and other big environmental themes have all been subjected to the inquiries of historians and ecologists alike. Only now are we turning our attention away from large concerns to the smaller, more subtle aspects of human involvement with the environment. Instead of concentrating specifically on what people did to the land–farm, irrigate, decimate numerous animal and plant species–historians are turning their attention to what people thought about their environments. The beliefs and values that determined action reveal complexities of the collective and individual conscience that actions alone cannot explain.

In examining the role of the environment in human history, recent scholarship has argued that wilderness is culturally constructed. Wilderness is not a place, but rather a state of mind. States of mind change, therefore, so does our definition of wilderness. The fluid definition of wilderness bears directly on how historians have approached wilderness and the environment: how we define something determines how we investigate it. Researching the works of nineteenth and early twentieth century writers gives us insight into how they defined wilderness at the time of their writing. How people write about wilderness is an open window to their culture's definitions of wilderness and all that definition implies, especially with regard to issues of land management, urbanization, and in the nineteenth century, religion. For example, we in the late twentieth century define wilderness differently than our predecessors. This affects our interpretation of legislation

drafted during that time, such as the legislation which established the first national parks. When investigating literature about "wilderness" one must always bear in mind that historic people had a much different notion of what wilderness was than we do today. Understanding contemporary definitions of wilderness has profound implications for the history of national parks, and it is this underlying theory of environmental history that I wish to examine with reference to Glacier National Park, Montana.

If, broadly, the historic interaction between landscape and culture is environmental history, then a national park is an ideal place in which to study it. The mountains and landscapes of Glacier were valued by a number of different groups (the Blackfeet and Kutenai[9], local white ranchers and farmers, miners, conservation groups, railroad

---

[9]Nomenclature for indigenous American groups is not straightforward. For example, the occurrence of "Blackfeet" or "Blackfoot" in the literature can both (or either) refer to a large collectivity that includes three major groups in Montana, Alberta, and Saskatchewan who speak the same language (or, confusingly, to either one of two of those sub-groups). Some initial clarification is in order. An American distinction is between the "Blackfeet" of Montana and the "Blackfoot" of Alberta, who have also been called "Siksika" in the literature. A Canadian distinction of long standing has been amongst the three groups, *Siksika* (or sometimes "Blackfoot proper" or "Northern Blackfoot") who have a reserve east of Calgary; *Kainah* (or "Blood") on the American-Canadian border; and *Piegan*, the latter subdivided into "Northern Piegan," who have a reserve in Alberta near Pincher Creek, and "South Piegan," who are organized in Montana as the "Blackfeet." In this work, context dictates how to interpret these terms. American sources using the term "Blackfeet" probably refer to the southern bands of the Piegan, the southernmost of the three groups (but who had close relationships with the Kainah, or Bloods, to their immediate north). It is these South Piegan people who probably had the closest association with the land of the park–though Northern Peigan and Kainah surely had an interest in it. More recent literature reflects a current Canadian usage of *Piikani* to refer to the Piegan, and *Nitsitapii* to refer to the large collectivity of all the groups. The groups situated west of the Piegan, and who are historically and pre-historically associated with the land of GNP present a no-less confusing tradition of naming than do the erstwhile "Blackfoot."

"Flathead" often refers to the aggregated sub-groups of Southern Interior Salish speakers who are now the predominant group on the Jocko Reservation (i.e., the Federated Salish-Kutenai Tribe). In this work I have used the term "Salish" to refer to them. The term has sometimes implied inclusion of Kutenai, Kalispel, and Pend d'Oreille Indians.

"Kutenai" includes a distinct aggregate of people, historically north of the Salish in the Rocky Mountains, westward to Columbia Lake, and eastward onto the prairies, who speak a language that is related to no other language, and evidence very long tenure in the area. The

magnates) for a number of different reasons, including spiritual and economic ones. Based on these different values, not everyone agreed that a portion of northwestern Montana should become a national park. These groups all had culturally mediated definitions of wilderness, and when Glacier was established in 1910, Congress and the people who lobbied for the park's formation made a defining statement about Montana's wilderness, and about how, and from whom, it should be protected. Knowing that even after the park was formed, logging, farming, and hunting continued, we must ask what the nature of this "protection" was. Between 1910 and 1945, private industry, GNP, and the National Park Service prepared the park for tourists by building roads, trails, and hotels, and establishing policies that kept the Blackfeet out and the ungulates in. What does GNP's experience say about wilderness?

This thesis will have three main components. First, I will discuss the historiography of American environmental history, thereby offering a definition of the field and describing the research on which it is based. These works range from James Malin's *The Grasslands of North America: Prolegomena to its History*–often referred to as the first "environmental" history–to social/political histories such as Frederick Jackson

---

southernmost groups now have a small reservation in northern Idaho, and some share the "Jocko" reservation by Flathead Lake with the Salish. The northern groups have very small reserves in Southeastern British Columbia. ("Kutenai" can also be seen as "Kootenay" or "Kootenai." They have also sometimes been called the "Kalsa" Indians.)

The easternmost subgroup of the Kutenai, a separate band but no longer existing as a collectivity, were the K'tunaxa (the most current spelling–they also appear in the literature as Tunaxa, Tunaxe, Salish-Tunaxe, Kutenai-Tunaxa, Tunahe, and similar permutations). They apparently lived on the plains east of Glacier National Park, and may have incorporated Salishan-speakers who lived with them.

Pend d'Oreille and Kalispel, sometimes considered to be the same, are both groups that speak related Salishan languages but, while maintaining separate identities from the Salish, have often lived amongst, or beside, Salish people.

Turner's *The Significance of the Frontier in American History,* and philosophical treatises like those of William Cronon. This section will demonstrate that environmental history is not new, but that the environment has been the subject of serious historical inquiry for the greater part of this century. I will discuss the way historians have approached the environment, and show how their methods have changed. The common theories and methods of this sub-field need to be described in order to propose a definition of environmental history, and to offer perspectives on the role of the environment in history. A description of what historians have had to say about the methodology of environmental history, and by implication, a definition of environmental history, are the substance of the first part of this work.

Second, I will describe the history and the historical literature dealing with the national parks. Much of this literature is not considered "environmental" because it falls outside the present definition of environmental history. I would like to examine what distinguishes these early environmental histories from works that are currently defined as environmental histories. Concentrating on a national park also permits the examination of literature dealing with an explicitly environmental institution–the National Park Service.

Third, I will examine the history of GNP from its origins to the mid-1930s. Given what I have proposed in the first part as the definition of environmental history, and looking at the literature of GNP in this light, what was the environmental history of GNP? What does its investigation reveal about the purview and definition of environmental history, specifically through peoples' understandings of "wilderness"? How did their definitions of wilderness shape the way they interpreted the history of this national park?

Studying the ways in which people thought about and interacted with the environment illuminates their understanding of wilderness. Understanding how people understood wilderness, in turn, gives insight into how they wrote about "wild" areas, namely national parks. This allows us to see more clearly not only past definitions of wilderness, but also the field of environmental history. Undertaking this study of the history of the idea of wilderness in Glacier National Park is a response to the plea for a little self-reflection in the field.

Chapter Two: Historiography

Introduction

Historians have been studying the American environment and its role in history for over a century, but only lately have environmental historians subjected their theories to the same in-depth critical exploration they have given their subject. Many of their analyses are concerned with methods of interpreting landscapes as historical documents. William Cronon and Richard White, two among a field of many exceptional scholars, lead the discussion concerning how historians should examine the environment's role in shaping past societies. The latest works of these historians deal with the historicity of the concept of wilderness. Their thought-provoking examinations of American communities and regions elevate environmental themes, such as the concept of wilderness, to categories of interpretation as important and revealing as class and gender.[10]

Alongside works that can be categorized manifestly as environmental histories there exist histories of the American National Park Service and various individual national parks. Despite obvious identification of national parks as a subject that is patently "environmental" in most of these articles and books, any claims to be environmental histories as such are notably absent. In this category of written history, discussions of the significance–the meaning–of the landscape to the people involved are not even

---

[10]I wish I could take credit for this observation, but it is William Cronon's. See "A Place for Stories: Nature, History and Narrative," *The Journal of American History* 78, no. 4 (1992): 1349.

introduced.[11] One of the best examples of this narrow focus is John Ise's *Our National Park Policy*. In this book Ise discusses the evolution of the policies that govern the management of national parks as a history of government and politics, but he neglects to raise the history of the land itself as being germane to the development of policy.[12]

This is not to suggest that the only appropriate history of national parks or of environmental legislation is a history that includes at least some focus on the meaning of the landscape to historical personages.[13] It does, however, demonstrate major theoretical differences between environmental historians and their colleagues in the discipline, even when their subject matter is identified in the same terms.

To historians trained in looking at other aspects of past societies, the environment is tacitly seen as passive, the recipient of, or setting for, human action. Analyses in that case logically center on how people have developed particular landscapes and on the legislation that concerns that development.[14] To environmental historians, by contrast, the

---

[11]This situation is slowly changing. Mark David Spence in particular has contributed to the field with "Crown of the Continent, Backbone of the World: The American Wilderness Ideal and Blackfeet Exclusion from Glacier National Park," *Environmental History* 1 no. 3 (1996): 22-39; and "Dispossessing the Wilderness: Yosemite Indians and the National Park Ideal, 1864-1930," *Pacific Historical Review* 65, no. 1 (1996): 27-59.

[12]John Ise, *Our National Park Policy: A Critical History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1961).

[13]For example, see the exceptional work by Elmo R. Richardson, *The Politics of Conservation: Crusades and Controversies 1897-1913* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1962), which is a thorough and focused examination of conservation's development as a political factor in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. See also Frank E. Smith, *The Politics of Conservation* (New York: Random House, 1962).

[14]Again, see the previously cited works by Richardson and Frank E. Smith. The most prominent histories of the National Park Service also reflect the view that the environment is passive: see especially John Ise, *Our National Park Policy* (previously cited); Freeman Tilden, *The National Parks* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), and Horace M. Albright, as told to Robert Cahn, *The Birth of the National Park Service: The Founding Years, 1913-33* (Salt Lake City: Howe Brothers, 1985).

land is an active agent in cultural change. Environmental historians begin with the premise that the ways in which people have approached and interacted with landscapes in the past have shaped–and been reactive to–people's understandings and values of those landscapes: the land plays some role in forming culture values, and those values affect the interaction of subsequent generations with the land.

In order to situate works on wilderness in national parks within the context of environmental history, this historiography will be divided into three sections. First, the field of American environmental history will be introduced. Second, histories of the national parks and the National Park Service, until recently the interest of non-environmental historians, will be examined. This section will be followed by a description of works dealing specifically with wilderness as a theme in historical analysis. Wilderness in history has been studied intensively by historians; understanding this concept has profound implications for interpreting the history of national parks. The final historiographic topic is the situation of this thesis in the context of environmental histories of national parks.

An Introduction to American Environmental History

Environmental history is the study of past human involvement with the environment. Although the environment had been a subject of historical inquiry since at least the middle of the nineteenth century, the field began to take shape in 1948.[15] That

---

[15]In America, according to Nash, investigating the history of the environment began in the middle of the nineteenth century, with Francis Parkman, Jr. (*The California and Oregon Trail*) and George Perkins Marsh (*Man and Nature: or, Physical Geography as Modified by Human Action*).

year, James Malin published an ecological history of the North American grasslands, a natural history supplemented with documents pertaining to the experiences and observations of the first European and American explorers of the region. Malin stood alone in the field until the late 1960s, when Roderick Nash joined him with his seminal book on American wilderness, *Wilderness and the American Mind*. Following in Nash's footsteps were Donald Worster, Alfred Crosby, William Cronon, and Richard White. Although by no means the only scholars contributing to the subject, these six are responsible for forming the field and for influencing the way historians have subsequently examined the dialectic between historic people and their landscapes. Because these works exemplify the field of environmental history, not explicitly the concept of wilderness, the theme on which the description of the field in this work focuses is a methodological one: the issue of present-centeredness.

Present-Centeredness

Environmental history, it can be argued, is by its very nature present-centered.[16] This may be because environmental historians, perhaps more than any others, are inevitably faced with the end-product of their study: historic changes to landscape are

[16]Using modern concepts and current definitions to investigate and explain events that occurred in the past distorts history. An astrophysicist working today may be intrigued by Galileo's methods, but would not interpret Galileo's theories based on current understandings of gamma rays and anti-matter because Galileo did not know about those particular theories. My perspective in this section was greatly informed by T.G. Ashplant and Adrian Wilson, "Present-Centred History and the Problem of Historical Knowledge," *The Historical Journal* 31, no. 2 (1988): 253-274.

frequently a visible part of the present.[17] Chronicling the events that lead to visible patterns and activities in regional and specific landscapes–be it corn farming in Iowa, or a network of irrigation canals in northern Wyoming–prompts one to engage in a simple search for the origins, the "start dates" if you will, of those features, not the historic cultural processes that led to corn farming or the construction of canals. Putting present-centeredness another way, interpreting women's historic roles solely through modern gender definitions is to miss the story. Historic developments on landscapes often co-exist with modern ones, blurring the lines between past and present, making it difficult for historians to resist using modern terms to interpret and explain the past.

What we end up with is the curious logic of present-centeredness and environmental history. Environmental historians accept unreservedly that the environment itself is as important a document as the text which describes the landscape. Furthermore, they hold that landscapes played vital, active roles in determining the human events that occurred upon and within them. Landscapes continue to shape the culture of their inhabitants, shaping, and being in turn shaped by, society. Historic changes are very much a part of the present. This may prompt, in modern residents of that landscape, a present-centered approach in describing it: because *my* landscape looks the same to me as it did to those who lived here one hundred years ago, surely the descriptive terms are the same.

---

[17]Political theories, such as democracy, are of course historic concepts that exist in some form today. Our democracy today is certainly not the democracy of ancient Athens, and while people may lament and/or applaud the evolved concept, scholars do not interpret the democracy of ancient Greece using modern concepts: ancient Greece and modern Canada both claim democratic governments but they are clearly not the same thing. The same is true of the environment. While the language and theory of modern historians continues to challenge past interpretations of political, social, and scientific history, this debate has not begun in earnest in environmental history to date. See Carolyn Merchant, "Ecological Revolutions," 22.

Present-centeredness is especially evident in historians' use of the term "wilderness"; wilderness does not change–there was just more of it two centuries ago, right?

The Six Historians Who Shaped a Field

In James Malin's groundbreaking work *The Grasslands of North America: Prolegomena to its History*, the author treated the grassland ecosystem as an historical text explicitly and unapologetically. He stated in his introduction that his method "recognizes the ecological, agronomical, pedagogical, and geographic factors that provide the setting for history."[18] He stressed the applicability of scientific methods to history and proceeded to reconstruct the grasslands' historic environment using scientific data, devoting only one chapter to historic human involvement with the region: early explorers' accounts of the environment. For Malin, botanical data, entomological records, and geological reports of the land and the life forms that inhabited it were the key sources of information in his quest to reconstruct the grasslands ecosystem, and Malin's methods grounded him firmly in the past. Unlike many subsequent environmental historians, who choose to interpret the landscape as an artifact that is constantly being modified by humans, Malin wanted to recreate the grasslands as they were before Europeans arrived. By explaining the modifications made by human communities, Malin hoped to reveal a snapshot of what the grasslands looked like before the arrival of European settlers. The landscape was more than a relic: it was a source. Thus, Malin approached his study with both eyes focused on the past.

---

[18]James Malin, *The Grasslands of North America: Prolegomena to its History* (Lawrence, Kansas: private printing, 1948).

Roderick Nash picked up where his predecessor left off and proceeded to take environmental history in a whole new direction. Recognizing the analytical limitations of Malin's method, Nash employed a methodology that stressed not the actual, physical landscape, but focused instead on philosophies about the environment. In other words, Nash took the focus off the dirt that makes up the ecosystem and emphasized the thoughts Americans had about that dirt. *Wilderness and the American Mind* changed the course of environmental history, as it demonstrated the impact the environment had on American culture from Puritan New England to the mid-twentieth century: an intellectual, rather than a natural, history of the environment became the fashionable approach.[19]

Using the historical texts of Thoreau, Emerson, and other notable Americans, Nash pulled environmental themes from a variety of sources in order to define and chart the changing conceptions of wilderness in American society. He investigated wilderness through the literature of urban-dwelling philosophers, and delivered a monochromatic picture of Americans and their ideology; Nash's "American" wilderness is middle-class white wilderness, not necessarily American Indian, working class lumberjack, or Chinese-American women's wilderness. Nash's work proves that wilderness is truly a social construct, by appealing to texts to justify his own cultural understandings of it. It is Nash's contention that interactions with specific environments shaped America's conception of wilderness. We must interpret the historic environment as a relic if we are to gain insight into that society's definition of things related to that relic. Nash, like Malin, understood the environment to be an historical relic insofar as it determined notions of the frontier,

---

[19]Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967).

nature and wilderness, but Nash's environment is a much more abstract and removed relic than Malin's, and that removal renders it open to different interpretation.

Donald Worster viewed the role of the environment in history much like Nash. In *Nature's Economy: The Roots of Ecology*, Worster approached the study of environmental history as an intellectual historian. He examined the lives of great figures of ecological thought and their perceptions of the environment, and the implications their thought had on the scientific community and on culture in general. Worster wrote biographies in order to reconstruct ecological ideology, and so he relied heavily on the literature created by well-known philosophers: Linneaus, Darwin, Voltaire, and so forth. The environment, while a relic inasmuch as these individuals wrote and philosophized about it, remained abstract and secondary to Worster's large question: what did these men have to say about the environment, and how were they influenced by, and in turn, influential themselves, of their societies' understandings of ecology? Worster incorporated both American and European literature in his analysis as he reconstructed the development of ecological thought. In so doing, Worster referred to the environment of the whole earth as a relic, but only as it was revealed by these men's writings. Like Nash, Worster turned to the intellectual and philosophical past to explain the present; this is one aspect of the present-centeredness of environmental history.[20]

Alfred Crosby is another historian who investigated the past in order to explain current biological and cultural phenomena. His central question is somewhat overwhelming: how were Europeans able to populate so many areas of the globe and

---

[20]Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy: The Roots of Ecology* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1977.)

dominate the world's economy, as evidenced by the "Neo-Europes" of Australia, New Zealand, and North and South America? He found the answer to his question in biology: Europeans in the New World and Australasia not only dominated indigenous inhabitants in warfare, but engaged in a type of biological combat as well.

In *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*, Crosby told the story of Columbus' arrival in the New World from a biological perspective.[21] Smallpox, and other viruses to which Europeans had an immunity, decimated populations which had never been exposed to such diseases. Furthermore, the Conquistadores and those who followed them brought domesticated animals–perhaps most notably the horse–and their advanced farming techniques to North America, which enabled them to create food surpluses and build their population. Crosby argued that better manipulation of their environment was the basis of European success in the Americas.

Crosby's analysis of the biological implications of the European settlement of North America led to another book which examined the issue on a global scale. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* examined the effect of disease and other biological factors in history, again focusing on the success of Europeans at expunging native species and replacing them with European ones.[22] He acceded that Europeans may have conquered indigenous populations because of better weapons, "but what in heaven's name is the reason the sun never sets on the empire of the

---

[21]Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Publishing Company, 1972).

[22]Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

dandelion?"[23] In presenting biological evidence to tell the political and economic history of the "Neo-Europes," Crosby ably demonstrated that the environment is an active role-player in history.

Richard White's *Land Use, Environment, and Social Change: The Shaping of Island County, Washington* marks a turning point in the methodology and approach of environmental history. White initiated a return to Malin's method, as once again the land itself is seen as a source, a starting point for historical analysis. White's methodology recognizes that the environment speaks as eloquently as text. He traced the environmental impact of both Indigenous and European inhabitants of Island County, and examined their consequences for those societies. He is thematic in his approach, looking at the main types of land use–hunting, farming, logging, agriculture and tourism–and the different types of landscapes those uses have created. His method relies on scientific surveys (such as geological and archeological reports), surveyor's notes, census reports of animals and crop yields–material which he says "may not seem promising ... to an historian who is not an expert in ecology, geography, botany, ... zoology"[24] but necessary to examine if historians want to understand the impact of humankind on environment. According to White, other disciplines have long recognized the historical elements of this material. With White, the environment itself becomes a source of historical data once again.

William Cronon's *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* is one of the most recent histories that utilizes White's methodology. Cronon stresses that he is not

---

[23]*Ibid.*, 7.

[24]Richard White, *Land Use, Environment, and Social Change: The Shaping of Island County, Washington* (Seattle: The University of Washington Press, 1980), 7.

looking for the origins of the Chicago area's environmental problems; rather, he traces the ways in which this landscape was transformed by humans and how this series of transformations anticipated many of the environmental problems this area faces today: deforestation, species' extinction, and the destruction of habitat, to name but a few. As Cronon's goal is to demonstrate environmental change in relation to human activity, he concentrates on the activity that has had the greatest impact on the Midwest environment: trade in natural resources between Chicago and the surrounding regions that supplied those resources. Like White, Cronon uses the landscape itself as an historical document, and balances this interpretation of the environment with rigorous examinations of conventional, textual historical documents. To Cronon, the environment is as valid a source of evidence for his study as are the legislative documents he examines.

The Field At Present: Definitions as Problems

Therefore, there are two main ways in which the environment has been interpreted by environmental historians. The first is to pursue environmental history in the manner of Malin, and to concentrate on the actual physical environment in order to construct a history of the land, using primarily scientific data to set the stage for later human involvement. The second approach is to undertake an analysis of the environment on the basis of standard historical documents, such as Emerson's writings, in the tradition of an intellectual historian, pulling out environmental themes and discussing the significance of nature to specific cultures and societies. Most environmental literature has been produced using one of these two approaches: in the first, the land is an overt, active source, and in the other, an abstract relic. However, this method is changing.

William Cronon and Richard White offer a methodology that incorporates the strengths of both these approaches. White and Cronon acknowledge the environment as the central and most important relic and ultimate starting point in their analyses–an indication of the present-minded nature of environmental history–and proceed to interpret it as a dynamic living record of human activity. Using historical documents to explain changes in the landscape, White and Cronon construct histories of the environment, and succeed in explaining historic relationships of humans with their environments.

The common thread that runs through this environmental literature is an awareness of the importance of the word. Malin, despite his ultra-scientific concentration, explicitly states in his chapter detailing early explorers' accounts of the grassland that "it is imperative that attention be directed to the meaning of terms as employed by each writer."[25] Cronon also notes that "careful, historically minded usage ... of problematic terms" such as "nature" and "the Great West" is the key to an accurate interpretation of historic texts in relation to the environment.[26] Nash and Worster go to great lengths to communicate the changing definitions and understandings of such terms as nature and wilderness. Despite the efforts of these historians to dispel confusion, wilderness remains a problematic term in historical literature.

---

[25]Malin, 82.

[26]William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1991).

Historians of the National Parks and National Park Service

Until recently, histories of the National Park Service and those of specific national parks focused on the origins of these institutions, without questioning the role of national parks in society beyond that of protecting and representing "our living heritage."[27] John Ise's *Our National Park Policy* does not venture beyond narrative in his description of the evolution of park policy. Freeman Tilden's *The National Parks* contains good descriptions of each national park but does not offer any thoughts on the nature of national parks, notwithstanding their role as protected scenic wonders. William C. Everhart and Horace Albright, important sources for descriptions of the personalities that formed the NPS, recount the events of the early years of the Service but do not tell a deeper story. The same is true of Robert Shankland's *Steve Mather of the National Parks*.[28] While all of these works have significant places in the historiography of national parks and the NPS, they focus on the meaning of people, not the meaning of land.

Lately, the focus of historians looking at parks and the NPS has shifted from the institutions themselves to the meaning of those institutions. The work of Joseph L. Sax, Larry M. Dilsaver, Richard West Sellars, and Alfred Runte headline this approach. Like Nash, White, and Spence, these authors examine the concept of wilderness, but from the perspective of parks (with the exception of Sax, who approaches the issue as a preservationist). Instead of seeing how wilderness was *created* in national parks, they look at how national parks *managed* and *packaged* wilderness. This is a significant distinction,

---

[27]This phrase comes from David Bower, ed., *Wilderness: America's Living Heritage* (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1961).

[28]All the works mentioned here have been previously cited except Robert Shankland, *Steven Mather of the National Parks* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970).

for the fact that it does not recognize that wilderness exists only as it is defined by humans. Assuming that there is land that is intrinsically "wilderness," with the end of "managing" it, denies the historicity of the term. It denies the humanity of wilderness by removing it from temporal analysis.

Joseph L. Sax's *Mountains Without Handrails: Reflections on the National Parks* addressed the issue of recreation in national parks.[29] Sax questioned if park administrators should bow to the demands of tourists and increase development to accommodate their increasing numbers, or if they should halt development to suit the principles of wilderness-seekers and preservationists. Sax highlighted a modern park issue and put it in historical context: as the Glacier writers indicate, building roads and trails and clearing campgrounds were considered essential in order for tourists in the first decades of the twentieth century to experience the wilderness.[30] Sax concluded that parks are more than ecological reserves, that they are profoundly cultural creations that exist for the benefit of the people. Their original purpose was to encourage wilderness encounters as inherently redeeming experiences.

---

[29]Joseph L. Sax, *Mountains Without Handrails: Reflections on the National Parks* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1980).

[30]I do not want to give the impression that I advocate development in parks. On the contrary, I am in line with current NPS thinking which advocates regulating, or reducing, the number and the impact of park visitors. Seventy years ago national parks were harder to reach, and the nation's population was smaller; naturally parks were concerned with providing amenities such as hotels, roads, and trails in order to make peoples' stay enjoyable and to encourage return visits. Now, the relative ease of reaching national parks has made day trippers–people who stay on the road and day-use trails–a real concern for park managers, one that did not exist even forty years ago.

Lary M. Dilsaver's *America's National Park System: The Critical Documents*[31] is a comprehensive assembly of primary documents produced by the NPS and its amorphous predecessors. He organized the documents chronologically and by theme, beginning with "The Early Years, 1864-1918" and "Defining the System, 1919-1932," closing the volume with "A System Threatened, 1981-1992." While a collection of some of the most significant documents pertaining to the national parks is significant enough a contribution to the literature, Dilsaver provided, as well, descriptions of historical context and thoughtful analyses of the documents in his introduction to each section. For example, "The New Deal Years, 1933-1941" includes documents about the Civilian Conservation Corps and a report entitled "Atmosphere in the National Parks." Dilsaver summarized the policy which precipitated the documents but he permitted the documents to speak for themselves. In its informed collection of documents and thoughtful elucidation of their meaning and context, Dilsaver's volume is unique and significant.

Richard West Sellars is an historian with the National Park Service. A prolific writer on the subject of the Service, Sellars concentrates mainly on the development of national park management. In articles such as "The Roots of National Park Management,"[32] "Science or Scenery? Conflict of Values in the National Parks,"[33] and "Manipulating Nature's Paradise: National Park Management Under Stephen T. Mather,

---

[31]Lary M. Dilsaver, ed., *America's National Park System: The Critical Documents* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowen and Littlefield, 1994).

[32]Richard West Sellars, "The Roots of National Park Management," *The Journal of Forestry* 90, no. 1 (1992): 16-19.

[33]Richard West Sellars, "Science or Scenery? A Conflict of Values in National Park Management," *Wilderness* 52, no. 185 (1989): 30-38.

1916-1929," [34] Sellars reconciles the current NPS focus on ecological issues with the historical record. He explains that the purpose of establishing the first national parks was not concern for vanishing wildlands, as the current preservationist and ecological interpretation of national parks would have us believe, but concern for a vanishing culture.[35] He describes how the NPS mandate gradually changed from a cultural to an ecological focus. As the products of an historian employed by the NPS, Sellars' articles demonstrate that park management is beginning to acknowledge once again the significance of culture to the national parks. He is one of the few historians of the National Park Service publishing in this area, so his work stands out in the literature of the field.

Perhaps the most widely read historian of the national parks is Alfred Runte. Two of his works are foundations in the historiography of environmental history: *National Parks: The American Experience* and *Yosemite: The Embattled Wilderness.*[36] Like Sellars, Runte sought to dispel the myth that national parks were created for altruistic notions of ecological integrity. In *National Parks* he defined the impetus behind the establishment of national parks as a search for national identity. The book focuses on the national atmosphere in which parks were created, and examines the personal thoughts of the people who were behind the creation of the national parks.

---

[34]Richard West Sellars, "Manipulating Nature's Paradise: National Park Management Under Stephen T. Mather, 1916-1929," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 43, no.2 (Spring 1993): 3-13.

[35]Sellars, "Roots," 16.

[36]Alfred Runte, *National Parks: The American Experience* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979) and *Yosemite: The Embattled Wilderness* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990).

In *National Parks* Runte apologized for not being able to focus on an individual park–his vision was too broad to permit an in-depth examination of the NPS mandate in action in one specific park. He compensated for that lack of detail by producing *Yosemite: The Embattled Wilderness*. *Yosemite* is a detailed look at the preservation-and-use debate that *National Parks* introduced. In these works, Runte took the stance of an environmental historian: he focused specifically on the ways in which Yosemite's landscape has been altered by administrations–through policies such as predator control and fire suppression–and with that focus described how those change reflect the developing resource-management philosophy of the NPS.

Historians and the Concept of Wilderness

Wilderness is not a new topic in history, but it is being analyzed differently now than when the concept first became an issue for historians. Frederick Jackson Turner was one of the first to analyze the role of wilderness in history when he delivered his paper "The Significance of The Frontier in American History" in 1893.[37] His thoughts on the subject still influence the way people understand national parks. Nash produced the classic *Wilderness and the American Mind* in 1967, and has contributed numerous other works to the field. William Cronon, Richard White, and Mark David Spence have all forwarded the wilderness debate, especially with regard to national parks.

---

[37]Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History,"in Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (*Annual Report of the American Historical Association,* 1893; New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920 and 1947): 1-38.

Turner argued that the American experience of settling the frontier and civilizing the wilderness created the American character, which in turn created American democracy.[38] Although Turner himself had experienced the frontier–his father was a pioneer, having settled in frontier Wisconsin–Turner went east to write about the frontier, perhaps to gain some objectivity. From that perspective, Turner observed that as the pioneer moved across the continent, he "transformed the wilderness, moved further away from European traditions, and created a new, independent phenomenon: the American."[39] Furthermore, "the demand for land and the love of wilderness freedom drew the frontier ever onward."[40]

As the frontier moved west, according to Turner, so did democracy, for "frontier individualism has from the beginning promoted democracy."[41] Pioneers who carved out a living in the west were "regenerated politically."[42] Turner did caution that the frontier could have a negative impact on one's character; he said that freedom could lead to "bad financial practices," "selfishness," and ultimately, low personal integrity.[43] However, the benefits of a western wilderness experience far outweighed the potentially negative ones. The wilderness enhanced the traits that characterized the ideal American: a dominant individualism; a practical, inventive turn of mind; and a "buoyancy and exuberance which

---

[38]*Ibid.*, 2-3.

[39]*Ibid.*, 4.

[40]*Ibid.*, 22.

[41]*Ibid.*, 30.

[42]*Ibid.*, 31.

[43]*Ibid.*, 34.

comes with freedom."[44] To Turner, the pioneer experience was the foundation of American democracy.

Turner's ideas concerning the frontier and wilderness had been culturally mediated. His views had been shaped by his family's first-hand participation in the Euro-American pioneering experience. The cultural transmission of frontier values is presented clearly in Roderick Nash's history of wilderness. Nash was perhaps the first scholar to argue that wilderness was not a place, but a state of mind described by feelings traditionally associated with wilderness: being awestruck and afraid, feeling lost and possibly threatened, and experiencing a general loss of control.[45] Quite apart from being the Adirondacks or Monument Valley, wilderness was whatever individuals thought it was. For some, wilderness was Yellowstone's back country, but for others, it was New York City. What Nash demonstrated in his work is that wilderness has a fluid cultural definition: the Puritans considered New England as wilderness when they arrived in 1642, but to its Indigenous inhabitants, it was as familiar as a back yard. European immigrants thought North America was a wilderness, therefore it was a wilderness; because we have grown up with the history and culture of Europeans instead of, for example, the Iroquois Confederacy, the readers of early tracts can imagine the Roanoke settlers encountering wilderness instead of occupied and cultivated land.

This conception of wilderness as the place where people are not is being challenged by historians such as Mark David Spence. Spence's analyses of Glacier and

---

[44]*Ibid.*, 37.

[45]Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*. Nash's book is the seminal one on the issue.

Yosemite National Park demonstrate how "wilderness" was constructed in national parks.[46] Both park administrations removed natives from their traditional lands in order to create the park, and then exploited the native presence to create a mythic Old West "wilderness" for the American public. The motives behind the administrators' actions were paradoxical and complex, but the intent was to create a perception of native cultures which did not contradict the prevailing notions of wilderness. Natives were no longer permitted to live, hunt, and farm in the area that had been their home; once relocated outside the park, they were permitted to sell baskets and even their pictures to tourists. "Wilderness," in the words of Richard White, was "not so much preserved as created."[47]

What is wilderness? Modern western society has been taught to view wilderness areas as places where human development has been either kept to a minimum or is forbidden altogether, where natural ecosystems regulate themselves without human interference. Or as the Wilderness Act defines it, places "untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."[48] Students of history are taught that the whole of North America was wilderness when Europeans arrived, wilderness which gradually succumbed to the ax and plow, in generally a westerly direction. We have been acculturated to believe that national parks are bastions of the wilderness, that they are all

---

[46]Spence's articles "Dispossessing the Wilderness" and "Crown of the Continent, Backbone of the World" have been previously cited.

[47]Richard White, "The New Western History and the National Parks," 31.

[48]Appendix A: *The Wilderness Act of 1964* in *Wilderness and the Quality of Life*, eds. Maxine E. McCloskey and James P. Gilligan (Sierra Club: San Francisco, 1969), 229. Or, refer to *The Wilderness Act of 1964, 16 U.S. Code* 113-1136 Section 2(c), 88th Congress, 2nd Session, September 3, 1964 (known sometimes as Public Law 88-577). We owe this understanding also to scientists like Aldo Leopold and organizations such as the Ecological Society of America, which during the 1920s and 1930s, called repeatedly for a re-evaluation of the purpose of protected wilderness areas based on ecological theories about the viability of landscapes.

that remains of the wilderness of Euro-American ancestors encountered as they settled the continent. This view is fossilized in the legacy of Frederick Jackson Turner. It was perpetuated by Roderick Nash. Only now is it being cross-examined by scholars such as Cronon, White, and Spence.

These historians have pointed out that "wilderness," as it has been discussed by historians, protected by Congress, and venerated by the Sierra Club, is nothing more than a construction of an urban, middle-class, educated, Euro-American elite. When nineteenth and early twentieth century academics, bureaucrats, and activists talked about "wilderness" they revealed their culturally and temporally defined conception of what constituted a wilderness area. The history of protection and management of wilderness areas is meaningful in itself, but unless we know how people defined wilderness, the story is only half understood.

In "The Trouble With Wilderness; or Getting Back To the Wrong Nature," William Cronon says that "[f]ar from being the one place on earth that stands apart from humanity, [wilderness] is quite profoundly a human creation–indeed, the creation of very particular human cultures at very particular moments in human history."[49] Unlike Nash, however, Cronon does not limit himself to describing wilderness from a singularly white perspective and calling it "American." Cronon elevates wilderness to an interpretive term by highlighting the differences between different class and ethnic perceptions of it: wealthy tourists who saw recreation potential when they saw the Adirondack wilderness, and laborers who could earn their living from logging and farming it; same place, two entirely

---

[49]William Cronon, "The Trouble With Wilderness," 69.

different perceptions. Cronon, like Spence and White, also argues that the relocation of Indians from traditional lands to reservations in order to create "uninhabited wilderness–uninhabited as never before in the human history of the place–reminds us just how invented ... the American wilderness really is."[50]

In fact, Cronon argues, wilderness is a "flight from history."[51] In wild places, it is believed, one experiences timeless truths which have been obscured by civilization. Whether the search for truth is a complex spiritual one, or as simple as witnessing the realities of the food chain, wilderness escapes the present and becomes a timeless landscape to those that seek it. This ahistorical perception of wilderness, historians have noted, is a thoughtless insult to the Indians who lived there before being relocated.[52] Furthermore, the belief that wilderness transcends history perpetuates value-laden, and frequently spiritual, language describing wilderness: since the Romantic movement of the nineteenth century, wilderness has been seen as the ideal place in which to seek the Divine. Wilderness experiences are still described by many in terms associated with the religious–awe, wonder, finding one's place in the larger scheme of life.[53] Wilderness' flight from history is inevitable, when the language used to describe it is often spiritual, very personal, and unavoidably present-centered.

---

[50] *Ibid.*, 79.

[51] *Ibid.*

[52] *Ibid.*

[53] *Ibid.*, 80.

Glacier National Park

The first history of Glacier National Park was written only nine years after the park was established.[54] The level of interest in the park that this indicates has not abated. Among the histories that followed the first are those commemorating the park's fiftieth anniversary, the articles of Jerry DeSanto, Michael Ober, Michael Schene, and Spence.[55] Many of these works are descriptive histories of the people and events that shaped the park. Few transcend narrative to interpret the actions that comprise Glacier's history.

Madison Grant wrote the *Early History of Glacier National Park* in 1919. His work is interesting, not only because it was the first history that was printed, but because he began the history of the park in 1804, when Lewis and Clark identified Chief Mountain, a prominent and distinct feature, on a map they sent to Thomas Jefferson. By defining the park's history spatially, in terms of geography, the author effectively removes the park from time; even though his subject is history, Glacier lies outside the temporal.[56] Grant spends little time discussing resource development in the park, preferring to brush over that aspect of its past and instead to describe place names that white explorers and Glacier Park founders assigned to different features. The process of renaming places is symbolic, and again, suggests that Glacier's history, and identity, began with the arrival of the European.

---

[54]Madison Grant, *The Early History of Glacier National Park Montana* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1919.)

[55]Spence is discussed at greater length in another section.

[56]Again, Cronon's "flight from history."

In 1960, the Montana Heritage Series printed a magazine called "Glorious Glacier: The Early History of Glacier National Park."[57] The magazine contains several interesting articles written by former park staff and amateur historians about the region's role in the fur trade, the move to establish the area as a park, and other aspects of the park's history. Completely narrative in tone, the magazine presents a comprehensive, if dated, chronology of the park's history.

Although Jerome DeSanto, Michael Ober, and Michael Schene do not call themselves environmental historians, their work examines aspects of human interaction with Glacier's landscape. Their histories are specific, local, and very detailed. DeSanto's articles, "Drilling in Kintla Lake: Montana's First Oil Well," and "Uncle Jeff: Mysterious Character of the North Fork" uncover the history of two under-studied aspects of Glacier's history: resource extraction and homesteading.[58] Michael Ober's investigation of the Civilian Conservation Corp's activities in the park reveal the extent of the Corp's involvement in developing the infrastructure that the park needed to support tourism: road construction, trail clearing, and the building of campgrounds. Michael Schene examined the role of the railroad in Glacier's early development.[59] His discussion demonstrates that private enterprise, in the form of the Great North Railway magnate Louis B. Hill, was

---

[57]Montana Historical Society, "Glorious Glacier: The Early History of Glacier National Park," (Helena, Montana: Montana Heritage Series No. 9, 1960). Articles have been cited individually by author as they are discussed.

[58]Jerome DeSanto, "Drilling in Kintla Lake: Montana's First Oil Well," *Montana* 35, no.2 (1985) 25-37; and "Uncle Jeff: Mysterious Character of the North Fork," *Montana* 32, no. 1 (1982):14-23.

[59]Michael Schene, "The Crown of the Continent: Private Enterprise and Public Interest in the Early Development of Glacier National Park," *Forest and Conservation History*34, no. 2 (1990): 69-75.

fundamental to the development of the park; Hill's railroad brought tourists to Glacier and his political influence ensured government appropriations to the under-budgeted park. These historians' work is significant not only because none other exists on the subject, but also because of the quality and detail of their analysis.

Glacier National Park and the Myth of Wilderness

This thesis presents a history of peoples' perceptions of wilderness in Glacier, and how those perceptions reflected a search for national character. No one has explored in detail, or with reference to a particular park, what the members of the urban, middle-class white subculture, those responsible for creating the myth of wilderness, said about the wilderness they hoped to experience on their summer vacation. It is my contention that understanding their perceptions of wilderness enhances our interpretation of national parks, illuminates aspects of the legacy of Turner's frontier thesis, and helps to demonstrate the mythical nature of wilderness.

Conclusion

Historians examining the history of national parks and wilderness all argue convincingly that national parks, and the wilderness ideal they perpetuate, are cultural constructs. Wilderness was created in national parks in such a way as to exclude natives and everyone else who could not share the mythic, mainly Euro-American, experience of the Old West and the frontier that Turner articulated. As a product of, and for, a particular society, the construct of "wilderness" must be interpreted in its historical context, particularly as this historic concept has implications today. Analyzing how this

term was used by the people who created it reveals first, how national parks were perceived and experienced by tourists; and second, that "wilderness" is very much a product of our imaginations, no matter how Congress may legislate it.

Chapter Three: "Playgrounds for the People": National Parks and the Wilderness Ideal

Introduction

Increasing belief in the sanctity of wilderness, concern with the implications of rapid industrial development, and national pride in the American character were the three most significant factors leading to the creation of the first national parks and the National Park Service. Each factor in turn dominated the rhetoric for setting aside large tracts of the American landscape as "playgrounds for the people,"[60] but for a brief period, between the late 1890s and 1910, these factors converged into one compelling argument for the preservation of public lands. During this time the nation witnessed a flurry of national park creation, which in turn led to the formation of the National Park Service to manage the newly established parks. What unified these seemingly distinct and unrelated sentiments was the means by which, all at once, the sanctity of wilderness could be honored, rapid development at least regionally contained, and national pride celebrated through a wilderness experience in a national park. Spending time in wild, untamed landscapes would instill in Americans the democratic principles held by their forebears, people whose exposure to frontier conditions had ultimately given rise to the American character and political system.

---

[60]I do not know who first coined this term, but it was common in the first part of the century to describe a national park as a "playground." Mathilde Edith Holtz and Katherine Bemis describe Glacier as such in *Glacier National Park: Its Trails and Treasures* (New York: George H. Doran, 1917). See also C.W. Buchholtz, "The National Park as Playground," *Journal of Sport History* 5, no.3 (1978): 21-36.

A Brief History of Wilderness

Pioneers and Wilderness

In 1851 Henry Thoreau wrote "in wildness is the preservation of the world."[61] Wild places were not always viewed by Americans with such a favorable eye. The first European inhabitants of America brought with them from the Old World a fear of the wilderness.[62] In the Judeo-Christian tradition there has been at least a current of thought in which wilderness was defined as the place where civilized people were not, a place where God banished those who had sinned. As Samuel Johnson wrote in 1755, the wilderness was "A desert, a tract of solitude and savageness."[63] To the Puritans who arrived on New England's shores in the 1640s, the New World presented an opportunity to fashion a new, improved society out of the wilderness.[64] Indeed, to early Americans,

---

[61]Henry David Thoreau, "The Transcendental View," in *The American Environment: Readings in the History of Conservation*, ed. Roderick Nash (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1968, orig. 1851): 12.

[62]As mentioned in Chapter Two, Nash gives the most eloquent and thorough discussion of the concept of wilderness to date in *Wilderness and the American Mind*. However, his argument is based on a Eurocentric perspective, and does not take into account the view of Native inhabitants of the "wilderness." Instead, he tacitly defines indigenous peoples as one more aspect of the wilderness experience, as much a part of the nineteenth-century North American wilderness as grizzly bears, the Mississippi River, and the Rocky Mountains.

[63]Samuel Johnson, as cited in Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 3.

[64]See especially Gerhard Strohmeier, "Wild West Imagery: Landscape Perceptions in Nineteenth-Century America," in *Nature and Society in Historical Context*, eds. Mikulas Teich, Roy Porter, and Bo Gustafsson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997): 257-273. R.C. Simmons' *The American Colonies From Settlement to Independence* (New York: W.W. Norton, and Co., 1976) is a detailed examination of the colonization of America, but the author only summarily mentions wilderness and exploration. The English Puritans believed that their responsibility was to continue to reform the church in the New World. According to one Puritan, who described the migration from Europe to North America, the religious revolution in which they participated had "from the beginning ... moved from the East, towards and at last unto the West, where it is like to end," and the Puritans held that "the Church hath none place left to flie into but the wildernesse" (27).

the wilderness was not only a very real threat to their physical survival, it was also a symbol of their Christian, spiritual struggle against the darkness. Settling the New World was an opportunity to fashion a new Garden of Eden for the Puritans: to tame the wilderness was to tame symbolically the forces of evil.[65] As Nash argues, the reaction of subsequent generations of European inhabitants to their New World reflected this fear of wild, unsettled, uncultivated country.[66] Clearly, people in the eighteenth century thought that exposure to it was not the best way to find emotional well-being.[67]

States of mind change, as do reactions to those states of mind. A change in the way Euro-Americans perceived the wilderness was inevitable, for despite their culturally based trepidation of wild places, to encounter and to settle them was God's command to early settlers, not to mention an unavoidable result of a growing population.[68] Villages were built, forests were cleared for farming, and what was once wilderness became settled town. The fuzzy line separating civilization from wilderness was pushed further west, and people followed it, crossed it, and if ambiguously, redefined it. As Alexis de Tocqueville noticed in Michigan Territory in 1831, the American response to the wilderness was no longer fear, but aggression.[69] The wilderness was to be transformed by farming, logging, or by some other means of commercializing it.[70] In the early nineteenth century,

---

[65]Nash, 258-259.

[66]As Nash explains, the etymology of the word 'wilderness' is Germanic, and in Old English was *wild-deor-ness,* which denoted that it was a place associated with untamed animals.

[67]Nash, 2.

[68]See especially Nash and Simmons for a thorough discussion of the issue.

[69]Again, refer to Nash for his discussion of de Tocqueville's impressions of early Euro-American response to their environments.

[70]Nash, 23.

American frontiersmen rarely spoke of wilderness without employment of utilitarian terms, or described their relationship to it without using terms such as "conquer" and "tame." It was their descendants, removed from frontier wilderness conditions, who began to sense the land's ethical values.[71]

Those Removed From a Wilderness Condition: The Philosophers

Romantic Philosophers

While pioneers were learning to tame (rather than to be afraid of) the wilderness, another change in outlook was occurring. European Romantic philosophers, most prominently Rousseau, were changing peoples' views about the way the world operated. Among the philosophies being reinterpreted was the one concerning nature. Instead of being the place where humankind was abandoned by God, wilderness was a place, philosophers remembered, that one also encountered God and angels.[72] Edmund Burke turned the theory of a "bad" wilderness on its head by saying that the fear of nature stemmed from an intense exultation and delight in nature, not from dread or loathing.[73] It was during the Romantic era that the conception of the Noble Savage became popular, and the New World, with all its wilderness and "Noble Savages," became the focus of these new theories about the role of nature in society.[74]

---

[71] *Ibid*, 43.

[72] Cronon, "The Trouble With Wilderness," 73.

[73] Nash, 45.

[74] Nash argues that most of the Romantic philosophers, and their philosophies, preferred to remain in the city, leaving the pioneers to encounter God and the Noble Savage in the wilderness on their own terms. The history of Indian-White relations and the increasing efforts

Defined by Romantic philosophy, wilderness described a popular literary and artistic genre, particularly in the United States. The themes articulated by artists such as Thomas Cole and Albert Bierstadt[75], and writers such as James Fenimore Cooper, reflect the growing pride of people of a nation which had awe-inspiring mountains, rivers, and other spectacular national features. Cooper in particular popularized the distinctly American frontier experience, encouraging many men to head west, face the elements, and become more "manly" through experiencing the wilderness, much like Hawkeye in *Last of the Mohicans*.[76] The qualities associated with being "manly" were also those of the good political citizen–chiefly, independent strength of mind. Indeed, by the middle decades of the nineteenth century, wilderness was recognized as a cultural and moral resource, and a source of national pride.[77] As the historian and author James Hall said of American forests: "the pomp and pride of the wilderness is here. Here is nature unspoiled, and silence undisturbed."[78] It was held that even if America did not have the cathedrals of Europe, it had the best wilderness in the world, and America's nature, if not her culture, would command the world's attention.[79] National pride was being translated into political rhetoric. Appreciating the natural features of the country and being

---

on behalf of the Euro-Americans to exploit all available resources would certainly support this conclusion.

[75]Prints of two particularly good examples of the romantic ideal in the art of the period, Cole's *Romantic Landscape* and Beirstadt's *Valley of the Yosemite*, are reproduced in Figures 2 and 3, page 126.

[76]James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986; orig. 1826).

[77]Nash, 67.

[78]James Hall, as cited in Nash, 59.

[79]Nash, 68.

comfortable in the wilderness were qualities associated with heroes in novels, and with good citizens.

Good citizens were encouraged to settle even further west by the notion of Manifest Destiny. For example, in the 1820s, men like the aforementioned Hall were capable of encouraging the westward march of civilization, while at the same time saying "I know of nothing more splendid than a forest of the west, standing in its original integrity."[80] Whether people in the nineteenth century made the connection between the splendid forest that would be clear cut to make way for farmhouses, fields of wheat, and encroaching towns, is debatable. While paradoxical for a twentieth century audience, this inconsistency–encouraging development while valuing the wilderness and beauty of the land being developed–is understandable given the elements of Manifest Destiny. Clearly, while nature and wilderness were becoming increasingly valued for what they represented to urban-dwelling middle class Americans, those same Americans were not protecting the wilderness from miners, lumberjacks, and ranchers moving west to claim the vast acres of land being offered for homesteading and mineral and resource extraction.

Transcendentalism

Romantic philosophers, as we have seen, changed the way people thought about wilderness. Wild places, formerly feared, became revered. Living close to nature strengthened the mind and body, and people believed that that particular source of strength was essential to sustain American democratic principles. Transcendentalists,

---

[80]As cited in Nash, 59.

however, did not believe that nature's role was merely political. To those philosophers, nature was of much greater importance: it was the source of religion. The more "natural" the area in which one wandered and spent time, the closer one came to achieving spiritual guidance and wisdom. Believing that there was a parallel relationship between physical objects and the spiritual realm, they held that natural objects reflected universal spiritual truths.[81]

This belief significantly influenced the development of national pride. To transcendentalists, nature was the proper church in which to connect to the Divine. Trees, canyons, wild flowers, and other natural features were manifestations of the Almighty, therefore, worshiping among them ignited the spark of divinity in man.[82] The wilder and less civilized the place in which one worshiped the closer one came to God. It followed that the more civilized an area, the less immediate was the relationship to the Divine. Transcendentalists recognized this spectrum.[83] Perhaps reflecting their urban roots (transcendentalists were usually urban, white, educated, middle class), they decided that the best place, one that offered the benefits of a natural, wilderness experience and the comforts of the city, was in the middle of the spectrum. This zone–the frontier–described the contemporary American scene: cutting down forests to build towns in a westward march. Because America was creating the perfect frontier in which to experience the Divine, transcendental philosophy blended religion with politics, encouraging a sense of national pride in the American wilderness. As the painter George Catlin expressed it, "the

---

[81]Nash, 85.

[82]*Ibid.*

[83]*Ibid.*, 95.

further we become separated from the pristine wilderness and beauty, the more pleasure does the mind of enlightened man feel in returning to those scenes."[84]

The belief in the sanctity of the wilderness originated, and found its greatest supporters, amongst urban, white, educated elites.[85] People who worked the land and derived their living from it saw the wilderness differently from those who sojourned in it temporarily for a spiritual experience. The same can be said of the wilderness preservation movement. It arose from the realization that the wilderness, valued for emotional and aesthetic reasons,[86] was rapidly being industrialized for economic reasons. Those who were engaged in an industry that relied on the resources of the wilderness did not necessarily support the preservation movement, for that meant they would be out of a job.[87] While appreciation of nature was certainly not limited to the urban middle class, the movement to preserve wilderness was spearheaded and found its greatest supporters among their numbers.

---

[84]*Ibid.*,101.

[85]See especially Cronon, "The Trouble With Wilderness," and Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*.

[86]See Nash, 96. See also Cronon, "The Trouble With Wilderness," and White, "The New Western History and the National Parks."

[87]This remains true today: see the debates concerning the landfill outside Joshua Tree Recreation Area, the mines outside Jasper National Park, Canada, and the international dispute between British Columbia, Glacier Park (Canada), and mining and logging interests.

"Absolutely American, Absolutely Democratic"[88]*: A Nation's Park*

The relationship between wilderness and national pride grew closer during the nineteenth century. People talked about preserving the wilderness for the benefit of American citizens very early in that century. The first area to catch the attention of preservationists was the area now known as Yellowstone National Park. Partly because the area was, and is, stunningly beautiful, the region captured peoples' imaginations. Just as important, the region exemplified the qualities increasingly associated with wilderness: it was on the western frontier, inhabited by Indians, rich in scenery.[89] Catlin, who traveled through the Yellowstone area in 1829, reflected what a good idea it would be to preserve the area, including the Indians who resided in the region, in a park:

> What a beautiful and thrilling specimen for America to preserve and hold up to the view of her refined citizens and the world, in future ages! A nation's Park, containing man and beast, in all the wild[ness] [*sic*] and freshness of their nature's beauty.[90]

Catlin raised a number of interesting points about nineteenth-century perceptions of wilderness with this brief statement. First, he identified those people who would benefit the most from this "nation's Park": America's "refined" middle and upper class citizens and people from other nations who could look with envy at the scenic wonders of America's wilderness. Second, Catlin stated that man–referring to Native people–would

---

[88]Wallace Stegner, "The Best Idea We Ever Had," *Wilderness* 46, no.160 (1983): 4.

[89]In "The New Western History and National Parks" Richard White argues that wilderness needed to reflect the nineteenth-century frontier experience of white versus Indian in order to qualify as true frontier "wilderness."

[90]Catlin, as cited in Nash, 101.

be included in this park that he was imagining.[91] Thoreau agreed with Catlin's assertion that preserving the wilderness was a good idea, but as we have read he went one step further and said that preserving wilderness was essential to preserving civilization.[92] Preserving wilderness in perpetuity, in a "nation's Park" which contained elk, bears, and Indigenous inhabitants, would be for the edification and enjoyment of "refined" citizens, and ultimately, for the preservation of civilization. By the 1830s preserving the wilderness was already taking the form of preserving the frontier experience of Euro-American migrants.

Preserving landscapes as nation's parks in practice, however, was not easy. When areas were set aside as protected lands, preserving wilderness was not even one of the explicit reasons. In fact, the first efforts in land preservation began when state governments assumed the responsibility for protecting specific areas from commercial exploitation. This is true of Arkansas, which set aside the Arkansas Hot Springs in 1832, and Yellowstone National Park, which was established in 1872. Even though it was a federal matter from the beginning, Yellowstone, like the state parks established before it, was established not to preserve wilderness, but to protect unique, specific, isolated spots from commercialization by individuals. In the case of Yellowstone, two million acres were set aside to protect its hot springs from private acquisition.

---

[91]We are left to assume that Indians–Noble Savages–would be incorporated into a park because they were wild and natural representatives of the wilderness, much like the animals Catlin refers to in the same breath.

[92]Nash, 102.

The debates which surrounded the establishment of New York's Adirondack State Park indicate that the rhetoric of park establishment in general was indeed concerned more with the protection of unique, significant spots than it was with wilderness. In the case of Adirondack, it was concern for the protection of a watershed that spurred the move to set it aside. Regardless of the practical, economic reasons originally motivating its establishment, by 1894 the arguments had changed. No longer was the water source to be protected, but the wilderness in which the headwaters were located was to be preserved as well. New York had become the first state to preserve wilderness intentionally, albeit for the purpose of recreation. Seven hundred thousand acres were protected from development to protect the headwaters of the Hudson River, and the argument that the wilderness would be used for the recreational needs of people was drafted into law.[93]

"Democracy is a Forest Product"[94] *or The Nature of Politics*

While John Muir and his fellow transcendentalists argued for the preservation of wilderness for spiritual reasons, Frederick Jackson Turner provided the environmentalists with very powerful ammunition for their cause. As much as people valued nature for its inherent beauty, when decisions were being made about preserving or using resources in a rapidly developing country, economic arguments generally prevailed. As has been discussed above, Manifest Destiny, not transcendentalism, appealed to the majority of

---

[93]*Ibid.*, 120-121.

[94]Frederick Jackson Turner, as cited in Nash, 146.

Americans.[95] However in 1893, when Turner delivered his speech "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," he made explicit the causal connection between wilderness experiences and the American character. Turner argued that the frontier was a key element in the formation of the American character. America's history provided the government with a compelling reason for preserving nature.[96]

John Muir, perhaps more than anyone in America then and now, meaningfully articulated the idea of peoples' inherent need for wilderness. Like Thoreau and Emerson before him, Muir believed that nature was the manifestation of God on earth.[97] For Muir, the landscape was the source of the spirit, and the wilder the landscape, the further removed from man's artificial constructs, the more accessible the spirit. From the beginning of his career as a spokesperson for the rights of nature, Muir spoke of wilderness preservation for the sake of wilderness. He did not couch his argument with talk of wilderness recreation potential; rather, he believed that time spent in the wilderness was a vital, essential component of humans' emotional, spiritual, and physical development, and that it should be preserved for its own sake.

---

[95]See Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*; Strohmeier; and Cronon, "The Trouble With Wilderness."

[96]This argument is made in Richard White, "The New Western History and the National Parks."

[97]John Muir, as cited in Nash, 124. For Muir's thoughts on wilderness, see his book *Our National Parks* (Boston and New York: The Houghton Mifflin Company, 1901). As much a descriptive guide designed to appeal to tourists as an explanation of why wilderness should be preserved, Muir's book articulates the transcendental theory that appealed to many of his contemporaries.

During a time when the pressure of "making decisions about unaltered tracts of land forced ambivalence into dogma,"[98] Muir became the steadfast protector of nature from developments. His main opponent in this struggle was the director of the United States Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot.[99] Explaining their differences, Muir said "the existence of wilderness was simply not compatible with productive forest management."[100] Pinchot, a "wise-use" or "planned development" advocate–the term one chose depended on which side of the preservationist debate they sat–clashed with Muir in 1897 over the admission of grazing sheep into federal reserves, include Yosemite National Park, the place undoubtedly closest to Muir's heart. From that time onwards, Muir gave his unreserved support to protecting national parks from development and private enterprise. Of the importance of wilderness to the human spirit, Muir said

---

[98]Nash, 130.

[99]Interagency rivalry regarding recreation and the preservation of wilderness began a unique history at this point. Already there was tension between the agencies, as many national parks, including Glacier, were being created out of existing national forests. The national parks and the National Park Service were by law preservationist agencies, whereas the United States Forest Service and the national forests represented the "wise-use" of forest resources. Both the NPS and the USFS were experiencing increases in recreational uses in the early twentieth century, and by 1929 the Forest Service had created "primitive areas," lands within the national forests in which no development–including roads–would be undertaken, in order to accommodate the increase in recreational users who wanted to experience the wilderness. The USFS crowed over its efforts to preserve the wilderness and took the NPS to task for permitting road construction and hotel development in the national parks; the roles of the agencies would seem to have switched. (See Craig W. Allin, *The Politics of Wilderness Preservation* [Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1982],71). However, in 1937 it was reported that of the over 13 million acres of primitive areas in 10 western states, degrees of logging, grazing, and roads were permitted in all but 300,000 acres (*Ibid.*, 83). In Montana, there are 3,375,699 acres set aside as federal wilderness areas, 99.8% of which is administered by the USFS (see USFS, "Table 7," 1998). Undoubtedly, an examination of wilderness in national forests and wilderness areas, specifically the Bob Marshall and Great Bear Wilderness Areas immediately south of Glacier, would be an intriguing study, but one beyond the scope of this thesis.

[100]John Muir, as cited in Nash, 137.

> [t]housands of tired, nerve-shaken, overcivilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity, and that mountain parks and reserves are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life.[101]

Muir's reference to over-civilized people fleeing the cities was not exaggeration. Beginning in the 1890s, the public began to defend the wilderness, and the vociferousness of that defense was stronger than the joy in wilderness development that de Tocqueville had noticed in Michigan barely sixty years before. Increasing urbanization led to overcrowded cities, inciting the same feelings of fear and panic that the wilderness once had inspired. People began to develop a growing pessimism and a belief that the increasing numbers of immigrants were diluting the "American strain," along with a distaste for civilization. Americans began to turn to their frontier past, to the wilderness experiences they believed had created the most desirable aspects of the American national character in their ancestors: virility, strength, and savagery.[102] With this kind of logic in defense of it, wilderness enjoyed a surge of public interest.

Frederick Jackson Turner believed that frontier conditions fostered individualism and independence.[103] Unfortunately for his generation, Turner had determined that the frontier had ended in 1892: Americans had settled the nation from coast to coast, the free land the government had been dealing to homesteaders had been distributed, and there was no new territory to explore. To Turner and his contemporaries, this had profound

---

[101]Muir, *Our National Parks*, 1.

[102]Nash, 145.

[103]*Ibid.*, 146.

implications for the character of future generations of Americans, who therefore could not participate in the character-building experience of the frontier.

If, as Turner argued, the frontier was gone, people had to find ways to retain its influence. They did so through organizations such as the Boy Scouts (which stressed that civilization led to "degeneracy"), the Boone and Crockett Club (of which George Bird Grinnell, "the father of Glacier National Park," was a member), and through the arts.[104] In what is arguably the most memorable depiction of the ideal frontier man, author Owen Wister created a character who represented the best elements of the American character–daring, possessed of endurance, and given to laughter–a character who is still being emulated.[105] Wilderness was taking hold of the American imagination like never before in its history.

Legislators decided that since the frontier was essential to the preservation of American democracy, then the frontier itself must be preserved. The means of saving the frontier was through national parks, which in Nash's words were "perpetual frontiers."[106] President Roosevelt, who recreated the frontier life on his ranch in South Dakota, also urged Americans to keep in touch with the wilderness. He personified the connections Americans were making between wilderness and citizenship, and was the perfect representative of the benefits of the frontier wilderness to American's political nature. As

---

[104]*Ibid.*, 148-157.

[105]Owen Wister, *The Virginian: A Horseman of the Plains* (New York: Pocket Books, 1977), 23. Wister's Virginian is the epitome of the American cowboy, someone who, in the narrator's words, "smote my American heart. ... [I]n their flesh our natural passions ran tumultuous; but often in their spirit sat hidden a true nobility, and often beneath its unexpected shining their figures took a heroic stature" (23-24).

[106]Nash, 151.

Cronon has pointed out, it is no coincidence that a number of national parks were established in the years following the publication of Frederick Jackson Turner's thesis.[107]

Despite the widespread popular support for wilderness, nostalgia for a frontier condition (whether real or imagined) was not strong enough to protect wilderness from monied interests. In 1913, city officials from San Francisco proposed that the Tuolomne River in Yosemite's Hetch Hetchy valley be dammed to provide water for their growing city. It quickly became a battle between preservationists, led by Muir, and conservationists, headed by Pinchot.

The rhetoric employed by the two men quickly turned the controversy about the dam into a war between commercial interests and protectors of the spirit, a war many perceived as one pitting the forces of good and evil against each other. The animosity between the two men resulted in heated–and for Muir, undoubtedly heartfelt–debate, generating a great deal of public involvement in the issue. "Hetch Hetchy," as the matter came to be called, created popular support for wilderness theretofore unseen in American history. Despite public backing for the sanctity of Yosemite, commercial, practical arguments prevailed. The bill passed the Senate on December 6, 1913, and was subsequently signed by President Wilson.

Preservationists had "lost the fight for Hetch Hetchy but they had won ground in the larger war for the existence of wilderness."[108] Opinion was that if federally protected land–national parks–were vulnerable to commercial exploitation, then all of America's

---

[107]William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness," 76-77.

[108]Nash, 180.

wilderness would inevitably be destroyed for the sake of development.[109] The Hetch Hetchy setback demonstrated to Americans that they could not be complacent about wilderness protection, and that areas currently preserved by federal legislation must be more aggressively protected. This was the climate in which the National Park Service was created.

Wilderness Management and the National Park Service

Up until 1916, national parks were patrolled by an assortment of soldiers from the army, various state officials, and others appointed to oversee the parks. Responsibility for national parks was shared by the departments of the Interior, War, and Agriculture. As the Hetch Hetchy debacle demonstrated, there was no consistent, comprehensive monitoring of the parks, no one to ensure systematically that the rules, such as they were, were being kept. The natural monuments preserved in parks, places intended to match Europe's cultural and architectural achievements with American wilderness, were being logged, strewn with garbage, and grazed by cattle, and no one was there to prevent it.

Control of the national parks could not be shared effectively by three departments, and ever since Hetch Hetchy, wilderness advocates knew that they could not be complacent with any issue that threatened the integrity of natural areas. Stephen Mather was among those who recognized that this situation had to change. Having witnessed the pathetic conditions at Yosemite and other parks, Mather was convinced that aggressive action must be taken to put the national parks back on track. A successful businessman

---

[109] *Ibid.*, 165.

and "keen student of public taste,"[110] Mather was asked to take the position of Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior in charge of the national parks in January 1915 because of his personal commitment to protect the integrity and purpose of national parks.[111]

Shortly after accepting his post, Mather organized a tour through the parks for a number of well-known individuals, including the editor of *National Geographic*. Designed to elicit Congressional funds for park improvements, the tour attracted a great deal of public attention because of its high-profile participants.[112] The tour enabled Mather to realize a number of objectives: first, he became more familiar with each national park and its particular requirements; second, he consolidated the favorable opinion of major newspapers toward parks because of the journalists he invited to join the tour; and third, he put wilderness protection back in the public eye. One of the improvements that Mather quickly realized was necessary was the creation of a corps of professional rangers to monitor the parks. The National Park Service was created

> to promote and regulate the use of national parks and monuments, taking such measures as to conform to the fundamental purpose of these preserves: "to conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."[113]

This mandate was interpreted by Mather to mean that the parks were to be developed to ensure that people enjoyed themselves when they stayed in parks.[114] Mather's

---

[110]Roderick Nash, "Path to Preservation," *Wilderness* 48, no. 165 (1985): 6.

[111]William C. Everhart, *The National Park Service* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1983): 14.

[112]*Ibid.*, 15.

[113]*Ibid.*, 16.

[114]Sellars, "Manipulating Nature's Paradise," 4.

administration was the first to interpret the congressional intent of the bill creating the NPS; during his tenure, "appropriate development" was that which encouraged tourism, while reflecting and fitting in with the natural surroundings.

Distinguishing what development administrators determined were desirable and which were not illustrates how wilderness was defined–and what wilderness was used for–in early twentieth century America. Between 1916 and 1929, the NPS built 1,298 miles of roads, 3,903 miles of trails, 1,623 miles of telephone and telegraph lines, and numerous campgrounds, office buildings, and other structures.[115] In some parks, such as Yosemite, golf courses and race tracks were built. These facilities were designed to attract tourists to national parks. Development that supported tourism, regardless if it was an 18-hole golf course or a campground, was acceptable, but commercial activities–mining, irrigation, and power plants–were not.[116]

It seems a contradiction that people would consider a golf course a welcome addition to a wilderness area when their intent was to conserve the "scenery." It appears illogical that clearing trees for eighteen holes would leave an area "unimpaired," whereas an underground pipeline, hidden from the view of all but the most critical observer, would not. In fact, many historians have criticized Mather and the early NPS for behaving hypocritically and establishing a tradition of tourist-related development in federally protected areas, a legacy that creates problems for park managers even today.[117] However, preserving wilderness by limiting human influence and permitting undeveloped

---

[115]Sellars, "Manipulating Nature's Paradise," 5.

[116]*Ibid.*, 6.

[117]Sellars' article "Manipulating Nature's Paradise" offers a good discussion of this issue.

ecosystems to regulate themselves naturally (as we in the late twentieth century might understand it) was not an explicit function of national park administration. National parks were created and administered to preserve remnants of the frontier in order to provide wilderness experiences for Americans removed by time, if not by place, from the frontier of their ancestors.

Park wilderness experiences were meant to mimic the experience of pioneers, yet be enjoyable. People who might not be able to scale mountains and ford glacier-fed rivers could still experience the frontier by golfing, hiking, and horseback riding in the shadow of a mountain, close to a world-class hotel. That same hotel might offer a night's entertainment of Native dancers and storytellers to further recreate the frontier setting, albeit in a non-confrontational manner. When national parks were established in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, they were not designed to preserve wilderness ecosystems in the absence of humans. Parks were created to preserve the frontier for the enjoyment of future generations of Americans.

Mather, then, was fulfilling the mandate of the NPS, and of national parks, by developing the parks for tourism. Parks were designed and managed to present an idealized version of the frontier to tourists: people could watch wild animals grazing in serene glades during the day, and retire to an elegant hotel at night. Preserving parks' wildlife was accomplished through what many called "façade management": the outward appearance, not the natural order of ecosystems, was preserved. Naturally occurring forest fires were suppressed, predator species were hunted to ensure high populations of ungulates (whose diets were supplemented with hay during the winter) and lakes were

stocked with fish, many with exotic species.[118] In fact, Crater Lake National Park had no native fish species in any of its lakes until the NPS stocked them.[119] Natives were relocated to reservations, and often invited back into the park to further enhance the frontier experience for tourists.

That national parks represented not only an outdated view of the frontier but also an outdated approach to science was quickly becoming apparent in the first two decades of this century. That they did not substantially change their approach to either is an indication that national parks were established to preserve not wilderness ecosystems, but an idealized, middle class Euro-American notion of the frontier wilderness, defined by its supposed role in American history. Beginning in the 1920s, natural scientists like Aldo Leopold and Charles Adams recommended that park management change to reflect new understandings of the role of fire and wildlife dynamics. These recommendations fell on deaf ears.[120] The Ecological Society of America and the American Association for the Advancement of Science both criticized parks for their efforts to introduce non-native species into parks, but these groups were ignored as well.[121]

Aldo Leopold changed the way the nation, if not the NPS, thought about wilderness. Instead of seeing wilderness merely as a place for the re-creation of a frontier condition, Leopold stressed the importance of the integrity of biological communities that

---

[118]Yellowstone maintained a bison ranch which supplied a number of national parks with the animals. See Sellars, "Manipulating Nature's Paradise," 8-9.

[119]*Ibid.*, 9.

[120]*Ibid.*, 11-12.

[121]*Ibid.* Also see Allin, *The Politics of Wilderness Preservation.*

were contained in national parks and other wilderness areas under the purview of the Forest Service. In the *Journal of Forestry* in 1921, Leopold defined wilderness as "a continuous stretch of country preserved in its natural state, open to lawful hunting and fishing, big enough to absorb a 2-weeks' pack trip, and kept devoid of roads, artificial trails, cottages, or other works of man."[122] Wilderness, for Leopold, reminded people of their relation to the natural world, and he made a connection between preserving American institutions and the ground from which they sprang. He wrote "is it not beside the point for us to be so solicitous about preserving [American] institutions without giving so much as a thought to preserving the environment which produced them, and which may now be one of our effective means of keeping them alive."[123]

Leopold's argument demonstrates how entrenched in the American psyche was Turner's frontier thesis.[124] Leopold was able to make a case for landscapes' and biological organisms' rights to protection from human activity, and at the same time to discuss humankind's need to experience that "non-human" frontier landscape. Sellars writes:

> The vision of the American primitive scene struck close to the deepest cultural reasons for the very existence of the parks, beyond preservation of scenery of ecology–the romantic nationalism that has always underlain the public's support of the parks, with the remnant frontier landscapes of high mountains and vast open spaces as powerful geographic symbols of national origins and national identity.[125]

---

[122]Aldo Leopold, as cited in Nash, *Wilderness*, 186.

[123]Nash, *Wilderness*, 188.

[124]See Richard White, "The New Western History and the National Parks," for his discussion on how Turner's thesis became entrenched in American public history.

[125]Sellars, "Science or Scenery?" 37.

In fact, the parks would practice "façade management" until the 1960s, when the Leopold Report was published. The report, which recognized that people had major ecological impacts on parks, recommended that biological communities within each park should be "maintained, or where necessary, recreated, as nearly as possible in the condition that prevailed when the area was first visited by the white man."[126] Because of scientists like Leopold, national parks were now recognized as protectors of ecosystems, not just as recreation areas. Wilderness in national parks was becoming a scientific matter, not just a cultural one.

---

[126] *Ibid.* At its most benign, an interpretation of that standard (the condition of the area when first visited by the white man) implies that "white men" despoiled environments. In fact, such a benign intention is unlikely, given the history of "white men" and others in discussing wilderness. Furthermore, while the idea behind this new policy may have been ecologically noble, there are problems with this approach to park management as well. Attempts to restore or to "re-create" the "pure" ecosystems that prevailed when Europeans first arrived ignores the impact Natives had on landscapes, including hunting, farming, and selectively burning areas. It also asks a great deal of historians: how are we able to know what Yellowstone looked like in 1872, before all the roads, trails and hotels were constructed, let alone what it looked like in 1800? Historical records that contain animal populations and vegetation analyses are neither common nor necessarily trustworthy, although the document situation varies among parks. The new policy also asked managers to manipulate ecological processes such as forest fires. The legacy of Yellowstone's fire of 1988 highlights the problems with both "facade management" and the new "re-creation" approach. By preventing fires to protect the vegetation–and the tourist–in the past, managers provided the 1988 fire with plenty of old fuel, demonstrating the dangers of that approach. Furthermore, asking managers to recreate the conditions that prevailed when "the white man" arrived once again ignores the human element. For instance, historic ecological processes have been determined in the case of fire history, and that data has been used to re-introduce fires in some parks. However, determining if that fire was caused by lightening or by a group of Shoshone hunters is another matter altogether. Which process are national park managers recreating–a "natural" fire history, or a human one?

Conclusion

The concept of wilderness has exerted a powerful influence in American history. From the early seventeenth century to the present day, Americans have held strong views about the purpose of wilderness. National parks are often upheld as bastions of the wilderness, the "greatest idea America ever had."[127] However, national parks were not established to protect and preserve wilderness landscapes, but rather to protect a white, urban, middle class symbolic landscape. National parks are products of a specific period in history when beliefs about the sanctity of wilderness, concern with the ramifications of unchecked commercial development, and patriotism, all combined to create a powerful movement toward the preservation of landscapes which were imbued with cultural values about wilderness. The fact that today national parks are believed to be the last remnants of the wilderness that covered North America is as much a misconception as is the belief that national parks were remnants of the frontier.

Regardless, people have expected to visit national parks and experience the frontier that their forebears did. That this frontier existed primarily in their imaginations, as products of legend and fiction, not from real, historical experiences, did not matter. Living in frontier conditions, they believed, would enhance in them the same qualities that their predecessors possessed–physical, mental, moral, and spiritual strength. Exposure to the frontier was important to Americans, because as Turner, and later Leopold, stated, it was the frontier experience that gave rise to American institutions.

---

[127]See Stegner's article of the same name, previously cited.

How does Glacier National Park reflect these beliefs? Was this why Glacier was established? Did people go to Glacier and experience a renewed sense of mental and physical vigor and patriotism? If so, what did they say about it?

As we shall see, quite a lot.

Chapter Four: A Brief History of Glacier National Park

Introduction and Overview

The *Wilderness Act* specifies that wilderness is a place as free as possible from human development, where people visit, but do not remain.[128] This definition of wilderness has been–in the past and in modern times as well–applied to national parks: wild, non-human landscapes. However, the history of Glacier demonstrates that the area is a profoundly human landscape, one that has been mined, logged, hunted, and paved extensively. Despite this record of human activity, Glacier is, in the minds of most of those who consider the matter, one of the wildest places in America.

The history of human involvement with the environment of Glacier National Park is long and varied in intensity. Of all the indigenous groups that were in the area at European contact, the Kutenai and Piegan maintained the longest presence in the region

---

[128]"Definition of Wilderness," *The Wilderness Act of 1964*, Public Law 577-88. Also see Howard Zahniser, "Wilderness Forever," in *Wilderness: America's Living Heritage*, ed. David Brower, (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1961): 155-162. Zahniser was the primary author of the Wilderness Bill which was passed by Congress in 1964. *The Wilderness Act,* articulated around thirty years after the period with which this study deals, incorporates these themes:

> (c) A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural condition and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

that is now the Park; their stories speak of land use and resource exploitation specific to the area. European fur traders and explorers are assumed to have been in the area as early as 1772 and to have constructed trading posts by the end of the eighteenth century.

Although permanent settlement did not immediately follow Lewis and Clark's return to the East in 1806, their expedition marked the end of the domination that the Blackfeet had begun to exercise over the plains immediately adjacent to the area, and the beginning of serious European occupation of the region. As the fur industry slumped during the 1850s, precious metals and boundary disputes with Canada surpassed furs as the major draw to northwest Montana. Interest in the area was further piqued by the discovery of oil and natural gas in 1891. At the same time that these resources drew people to the region, the scenery attracted many who valued the area's spectacular landscape. By 1902 it had become apparent that the limited extent of oil and gas resources rendered them worthless to exploit, and a lobby to preserve this area as a national park gained momentum.

One of the main types of land exploitation in GNP has been trail and road construction. From the time of its enacting legislation and initial appropriations, accessibility has been a major concern of those involved with operating and visiting the park. Concerns first with attracting people to Glacier, and secondarily with their mobility once within the park's boundaries, have been the focus of debate in a number of issues: appropriations from Washington, the role of private corporations in public lands, the regulation of wildlife, and controversial wildlife-human interactions. Other modifications to the environment of GNP have come in the form of building and campsite construction,

introduction of exotic flora and fauna, elimination of indigenous species (both human and non-human), and fire management.

Human manipulation of the landscape now designated as GNP has taken many forms, changing drastically in intensity and scope during the past two hundred years. Perhaps the most varied (and momentous) of these modifications have taken place during the last one hundred. The 1890s witnessed both a desire on the one hand to exploit this area's natural resources, and a growing conviction that this unique and fragile ecosystem be protected. The dominant force within this dynamic–the urge to exploit and preserve–is inherently related to society's attitudes about land use, and a study of this dynamic enhances our understanding of historic modifications made on the landscape. Past human use and historic perception of the landscape of Glacier illuminates our understanding of the historic dynamic between exploitation and preservation. It also reveals contemporary thought about wilderness.

This discussion turns on expressing two sets of relationships. The first is human definition of landscape relative to human action affecting landscape. The second relationship is between human agency and the landscape itself, in a place where human agency or the lack of it contribute to the definition of the place. With specific reference to the Glacier National Park area, those relationships are best illuminated by providing specific descriptions of human actions, over time, in the area. More directly, a definition as "wilderness" suggests minimum human agency: the question, how much of a wilderness can Glacier Park be, has to be addressed with a descriptive examination of human agency in the area.

Pre-contact Human Habitation In GNP

Humans have been active in the land that is now GNP at least since the end of the last ice age[129], so if the area is "wilderness" it is a kind of wilderness that has been the setting for human activity for the last 10,000 years.[130] Until recently there has been quite a bit more archaeological description about land use immediately outside the present park (e.g., Waterton National Park, Crowsnest Pass, the northern plains) than about sites in the park, proper, but the early 1990s saw an increase in site assessment and archaeological field work in GNP.[131] There is a well established sequence of tool traditions in the area immediately north and east of the park, that demonstrates continuity with the neighboring plains and mountain plateau areas during the past 8,000 years,[132] and a fairly well-documented archaeological and geological record for the Columbia watershed that includes the west side of the park.

---

[129]Barbara Huck and Doug Whiteway, *In Search of Ancient Alberta* (Winnipeg: Heartland Publications, 1998).

[130]Huck and Whiteway; see also Parks Canada, "Chapter 11: Human History," *Waterton Resource Guide* (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1997): 11.1-11.20.

[131]See, for example, the reports on archaeological fieldwork in Glacier National Park during the 1993, 1994, and 1995 seasons, and presented with limited distribution by the National Park Service office in Denver during 1995, 1996, and 1997. The three reports, in several volumes, are cited individually or collectively in the bibliography by their authors, Kenneth W. Karsmizki, B.O.K. Reeves, and Mark Shortt.

[132]See, for example, Margaret Kennedy, Thayer Smith, and B.O. K. Reeves, *Final Report, Conservation Excavations DjPq-1: An 8000 year record of human occupation in the Crowsnest Pass, B.C., in two volumes* (Calgary: Lifeways of Canada, Ltd., Calgary, Alberta, 1982); and B.O.K. Reeves,*Oldman River Dam Phase II Archaeological and Historical Resources Inventory and Assessment. Volume II: Prehistoric Sites* (Calgary: Lifeways of Canada, 1986) as well as a large corpus of archaeological literature concerning the Northern Plains.

A wealth of ethnographic and historical information about the major groups in this area was produced when the Salish, Kutenai, Kalispel, Pend d'Oreille, and Blackfeet tribes brought suit against the United States in the early 1950s for equitable compensation for ceded land, and commissioned authoritative reports on tribal histories, with specific reference to the groups' affiliation with land. In 1974 Garland Publishing made the most important of those reports available in a series of reprints. Paul C. Phillips documented a history of the two main western groups in the area, the Salish and Kutenai,[133] and Stuart A. Chalfant focused upon the Kalispel, many of whom joined with the Salish and Kutenai during the nineteenth century, and who, according to most nineteenth-century European descriptions of Indian territory, seem to have been situated closest of all the groups to the western slopes of GNP.[134] In another work, Chalfant focused specifically on the issue of aboriginal territoriality for all three groups.[135]

---

[133]Paul C. Phillips, "History of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation," in *Interior Salish and Eastern Washington Indians, Volume III,* by E. O. Fuller, S. A. Chalfant, and P. C. Phillips, Garland American Indian Ethnohistory Series: Indians of the Northwest (1952; reprint of Indian Claims Commission Docket No. 61, Petitioner's Exhibit 1, New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974): 233-306.

[134]Stuart A. Chalfant, "Aboriginal Territory of the Kalispel Indians," in *Interior Salish and Eastern Washington Indians, Volume III,* by E. O. Fuller, S. A. Chalfant, and P. C. Phillips, Garland American Indian Ethnohistory Series: Indians of the Northwest (1952; reprint of a report based on ethno-historic research and field inquiry in reference to the Kalispel Tribe of Indians v. The United States, Docket No. 94, before the Indian Claims Commission, New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974): 169-232.

[135]Stuart A. Chalfant, "Aboriginal Territories of the Flathead, Pend d'Oreille, and Kutenai Indians of Western Montana" in *Interior Salish and Eastern Washington Indians, Volume II,* by S.A. Chalfant, C. Malouf, and M.G. Burlingame, Garland American Indian Ethnohistory Series: Indians of the Northwest (1952; reprint of a report to Indian Claims Commission, The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Montana v. The United States of America, New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974): 25-116.

Figure 4 on page 127 compares the general locations of those aboriginal groups who had some interest in the GNP area during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. The tribal group that appears to have the longest association with the GNP area is the Kutenai.[136] Their ancient territory extended from what is now southeastern British Columbia, northward along the Rocky Mountain area–and periodically onto the plains–of Alberta, eastward into the foothills and plains of Montana and Southern Alberta, west toward what is now far northern Idaho, and south to the Flathead Lake area of Montana. Descriptions of their territory during the nineteenth century show it becoming much smaller during that century, though the center remained at Tobacco Plains, near present-day Eureka, Montana. Their association with the area goes back several hundred years at least, and probably thousands.[137] Before the reintroduction of the horse to that area in the early eighteenth century, the entire eastern area of the park and the adjacent plains–usually associated with the South Piegan in historic times–was likely inhabited by a division of the Kutenai called by Turney-High the "Tunaxe," or "Tunahe," and there may have been a division of the Salish (i.e., Flathead) people called by that same name who lived in the

---

[136]See Chalfant and Phillips, cited above, as well as the work by E.O. Fuller, "The Confederated Salish and Kutenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation," in *Interior Salish and Eastern Washington Indians, Volume III,* by E. O. Fuller, S. A. Chalfant, and P. C. Phillips, Garland American Indian Ethnohistory Series: Indians of the Northwest (1952; reprint of Report to Indian Claims Commission in Re The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Montana v. The United States of America, New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc. 1974): 25-168; Harry Holbert Turney-High, *Ethnography of the Kutenai.* Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association, No. 56 (Menasha, Wisconsin: American Anthropological Association, 1941); Harry Holbert Turney-High, *The Flathead Indians of Montana,* Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association, Supplement 48, Vol. 34, No. 4 (Menasha, Wisconsin: American Anthropological Association, 1937); James A. Teit, *The Salishan Tribes of the Western Plateau,* Forty-Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology. (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of American Ethnology,1927-1928).

[137]Parks Canada, "Human History," 11.1.

area. Or it may have been that the term was given to Salish people who lived with that division of the Kutenai. Pend d'Oreille and Kalispel Indians[138] were on the west slope and in fact mixed with the Kutenai.[139] Some Kutenai seem to have remained on the east side of the Rockies and on the plains all year, and some Kutenai and Salish came from west of the divide onto the river valleys of the plains southeast of GNP only during the winter.

Before white contact, the east slope and plains areas saw use as well by the Salish, Pend d'Oreille, and Kalispel; occasionally by Nez Perce and Coeur d'Alene, from further west; more than occasionally by Piegan from the northeast; and even by the Shoshoni, who occupied an area immediately south of the Salish. The "Tunaxe," who had some centrality of place in the park area and east, were decimated by disease in the early eighteenth century, with remnants withdrawing westward as the Piegan extended their domain south. Parks Canada's summary places "the ancestors of the Piikani" (Piegan) in the Waterton area at least by 3,000 years ago,[140] but Ewers says that the South Piegan extended as far south as north central Montana only in the early part of the eighteenth century.[141]

---

[138]Several classifications regard the Kalispel as a sub-group of the Pend d'Oreilles; several do not.

[139]Chalfant, *Aboriginal*, 35, referring to Teit's discussion of the "Tonaxa."

[140]Parks Canada, "Human History," 11.2; their authority appears to be a 1997 personal communication with Professor Brian O.K. Reeves, who is the most widely known and published archaeologist in this area.

[141]John C. Ewers, *Ethnological report on the Blackfoot and Gros Ventre Tribes of Indians Lands in Northern Montana,* ed. David Agee Horr; intros. Ralph A. Barney and Robert Manners, (1952; reprint of report, Docket No. 279-A, Indian Claims Commission, Garland American Indian Ethnology Series, ed. David Agee Horr, (1952; New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974): 23-202.

Claims to Land Around Glacier, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

GNP includes two clearly demarcated natural boundaries, the Continental Divide at the crest of the Rockies, and the eastern edge of the Rockies where there is a dramatic change from mountain terrain to the Great Plains. Ethnologists and early travelers appeared to think of those natural boundaries as marking the limits of cultural areas which had distinct cultural traditions and histories: as natural boundaries they were convenient–and so apparently reasonable–for marking the limits of a people's territory. However apparently reasonable, such demarcation does not fit with prehistoric or historical description of Indian land use. In the establishment of European claims to land and in the ascription of interest in land to Indian people (i.e., in ethnology and in the making of treaties), Europeans have demarcated political and legal boundaries along both of the north-south lines provided by the Divide and the mountain-plains transition. Indian history of the place gives those "natural" boundaries much less importance in description of affiliation with land.

Groups of South Piegan challenged exclusive Kutenai and Salish control of the eastern slopes and adjacent plains during the eighteenth century: smallpox epidemics in the 1730s and 1780s probably contributed to the movement of South Piegan southward from the center of Blackfoot domain in the South Saskatchewan watershed, and to the relative depopulation of the area when smallpox decimated the Tunaxe. The horse was reintroduced to the area early in the eighteenth century by the Shoshoni, from west and south of the Rockies, and so Salish people had horses before the Piegan did. The horse dramatically changed seasonal economic patterns for the Salish first–perhaps not so much

for the Kutenai–then for the South Piegan and other Blackfeet. The balance of power between the Indian groups in the area was further upset when the Blackfeet were the first to acquire firearms from Cree and Assiniboine people to the northeast. Old territories and old relationships changed and changed again.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Europeans conceived of aboriginal territories bounded generally by the continental divide (at least according to maps and travelers' accounts): Blackfeet (South Piegan) were thought to control the eastern slope of park country and the Salishan groups (Salish, Kalispel, Pend d'Oreilles) and Kutenai controlled the western slope. In fact, there appears to have been joint use amongst the tribes, with a kind of tacit recognition of the centrality of the Kalispel on the west slope, and the Kutenai–the Tunaxe group, especially–and their affiliates in the northern and eastern areas immediately around GNP.[142]

European and Euro-American Definition of the Land in the Nineteenth Century

Effective control of the area by the United States did not come about until around ten years after the Stevens Treaties of 1855[143] were negotiated, or arguably, until the disappearance of the buffalo in the 1880s. Claims by Europeans and Americans predated that control by many years, and it is interesting to note the chronology of change in the way Europeans defined the territories they claimed. The area that is now GNP was on

---

[142]A few authorities note that one line of Kutenai defense against the Piegan was the warning to them that Logan Pass was haunted.

[143]Figure 5 on page 128 demonstrates the boundaries of the land ceded by Western Montana Indians in the first Treaty of 1855, as well as other land cessions and reservations that affected the GNP area during the nineteenth century.

two major boundaries of European definition–a north and south boundary that marked the northwest extremity of the Louisiana Purchase along a natural boundary, the continental divide, and an abstract east-west boundary between land claimed by Americans to the south and by the British to the North.

The west slope of the park was included in the initial definition of Oregon Country, jointly administered by Britain and the United States until 1846 when the present northern boundary between British North America and the United States was established by extending the 1818 line, the 49th parallel, west of the divide. The west side of the park became the extreme northeast corner of Oregon Territory in 1848, with a name change to Washington Territory in 1853 when the present boundaries of Oregon were set.

The east side of the park was the far northwest corner of Louisiana as it was defined in the purchase of the territory by the US from France in 1803, France having previously alienated the territorial claim from Spain. The park's east side became part of Missouri Territory in 1812, and its northern boundary was established in 1818 as the border between the United States and British country. The eastern park area was subsequently described as part of "unorganized territory," but in 1854 it was included as the northwest extremity of "Nebraska Territory."

In1864 the present boundaries of the State of Montana were defined as Montana Territory by joining two sections of Washington and Nebraska territories, and the park area was no longer on an east-west border. Montana was admitted as a state, with the same boundaries, in 1889.

Eighteenth Century Exploration and The Early Fur Trade

The fur trade has been said to be of only "incidental" significance to the Glacier area.[144] While fur-bearing animals were being trapped and sent eastward through established posts in adjacent regions, northwestern Montana seems to have been avoided by people intent on making quick trips to and from the east. The historical record does include evidence of men who approached Glacier; Anthony Henday, affiliated with the Hudson's Bay Company, was probably the first European to come anywhere near the area when he spent the winter of 1754-55 with the Blackfeet around the Bow, Red Deer, and South Saskatchewan Rivers in Alberta.[145] Henday's experience prompted other fur trade companies to send men to explore the region; by 1773 Cumberland House on the Saskatchewan had been established.[146] Thirteen years later, in 1786, an unknown man (identified only as "Mr. M.") reportedly camped by the headwaters of the Missouri River (near present day Three Forks[147], Montana).[148] While there is a great deal of controversy concerning "Mr. M's" claim that his brigade's attempt to cross the Rockies was thwarted by hostile Indians, the details provided in recounting the trip have led historians to conclude that "Mr. M." was most likely the first European to approach what is now GNP

---

[144]Ralph R. Beals, "Earliest Glacier: A By-Passed Beaver Bonanza," in *Glorious Glacier: The Early History of Glacier National Park* (Helena, Montana: Montana Historical Society, 1960): 2.

[145]*Ibid.*, 3.

[146]*Ibid.*, 4.

[147]Three Forks and other frequently cited locations in Montana are represented on the map in Figure 6 on page 129.

[148]Beals, 4.

via the Marias River, his trip predating the Lewis and Clark expedition by at least fifteen years.[149]

David Thompson skirted the Glacier area when he journeyed along the Columbia River. In 1794, he surveyed and traded among the Mandan along the Missouri, where he learned that free traders, outfitted by the HBC, had been trading for years. By 1810, several posts had been established among the Kalispel, Couer d'Alene, and Salish Indians, and traders were becoming increasingly involved with the Natives. White men began participating in buffalo hunts and warfare, especially among the Salish and Piegan. Notable battle sites include Marias Pass and Cutbank Pass.[150]

The Nineteenth Century: Trade and Exploration

As de Tocqueville had noticed in Michigan Territory, Americans of the early nineteenth century were seeking new places in which to commercialize wilderness resources. The first decades of the nineteenth century saw increasing activity and settlement in Montana, as is evidenced by the construction of many fur trade posts. In addition to these posts, by 1816 the first recorded white settler of Glacier National Park, Hugh Monroe, took up residence in the park.[151] The first Fort Benton was established at the junction of the Yellowstone and Big Horn Rivers by the Astorians in 1821. The following year, the Rocky Mountain Fur Company opened a post at the mouth of the

---

[149]*Ibid.*

[150]*Ibid.*, 5.

[151]Agnes Laut, *Enchanted Trails of Glacier National Park* (New York: Robert M. McBride and Co., 1926), 24.

Yellowstone. By 1831, trading relations were solidified with the Blackfeet, with the assistance of Monroe, and Fort Piegan was constructed. The fort was rebuilt the next year, renamed Fort McKenzie, and its inhabitants mediated activities between residents of the Glacier area and the Blackfeet.[152] The year 1832 also saw the first steamboat make its way up to Fort Union at the mouth of Yellowstone. Father DeSmet began his life with the Salish during the 1840s and Fort Benton–along the Missouri–was built in 1846. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Americans in ever-increasing numbers were beginning to recognize the value of Montana's rich furs and agricultural lands.

The treaty process through which the Blackfeet came to be associated with the Glacier area began at this time. A treaty negotiated at Fort Laramie, far to the south, in 1851, involved the Indians of the Glacier area, though they were not represented there. As Ewers says "although the Blackfeet and Gros Ventre were not a party to this treaty, a portion of their lands were defined in the treaty."[153] By ascribing to the Blackfeet and Gros Ventre a large area in Montana north of the Missouri, and by describing the western boundary of Blackfeet territory as being the Rocky Mountains, the American negotiators assigned a kind of exclusive interest to the Blackfeet in what became the eastern half of GNP.[154] None of the Salish, Pend d'Oreille, or Kutenai who had been in that area east of the divide were party to the Fort Laramie treaty either, though the instrument seemed

---

[152]Beals, 5. Apparently, the Blackfeet had been told that the fort was a permanent one, but when the post closed for the winter they assumed it was for good, and burned it down to express their disgust–hence the reconstruction (and renaming) the following year.

[153]Ewers, *The Blackfeet and Gros Ventre*.

[154]Father DeSmet's map of Indian bands and territories, which he prepared for that round of treaty negotiations, appears to have made no such exclusive assignment.

summarily to attempt to exclude them from land in which at least the Kutenai, and most likely the Salish, had had primary interest for centuries.

James Doty, a member of the earliest railroad survey party led by Washington Territory Governor I.I. Stevens in 1853, wrote extensively about the region. He was commissioned by Stevens to describe Indian territories, and to tell which groups inhabited which areas. By 1855 Stevens was prepared to negotiate two treaties with Indians of the northeastern quadrant of Washington territory, as well as with the Blackfeet to the east. One of the motivations for Salish participation was said to be their desire to see an end to Blackfeet aggression across the passes into the western valleys. The Stevens Treaty of July 16, 1855, negotiated at Hell Gate, Montana, saw the Flathead (i.e., Salish), Pend d'Oreille, Kalispel, and Kutenai Indians cede a large portion of land that included what is now the part of GNP that is west of the continental divide. A reservation (called the "Jocko" reservation) was a few miles south of the eventual southwestern border of GNP. In another 1855 treaty, this one Stevens negotiated with the Blackfeet, there was no cession of land by the Blackfeet but there was an assignment of tribes east of the continental divide to specific areas. A common hunting ground to the south of Blackfeet territory was to be shared by a number of tribes, including those on the Jocko reservation, though there was to be no permanent settlement by Indians in the area.[155]

The western tribes (the three Salishan groups and Kutenai) disputed their exclusion from crossing the mountains in the northernmost part of Montana, and their claim, based

---

[155]Phillips, 290-291

on antiquity, was not challenged by the Blackfeet. In practice, those western groups continued to use the putatively Blackfoot country.

The Palliser Expedition passed through the park area in 1857-58, making valuable comments about the geology of the area. Archibald Campbell led the Northwest Boundary Survey, which began in 1861.[156] The party built a station in the north end of the park upon reaching the Continental Divide. The crew that surveyed from east to west, led by a Captain Ames, was a comprehensive mapping and scientific expedition. This international boundary survey was complete in 1872. By 1874, three new posts (Whoop-Up, Stand-off, and Pincher Creek) had been established in Blackfeet territory.

The pressure for containment of Indians and for American control of land increased with the discovery of gold in Montana in 1862, and there was a relatively large increase in the non-Indian population of the territory during that decade. It is certainly fair to say that the decades of the 1860s and 1870s were years of conflict and violence between Blackfeet and whites. Attempts to negotiate new treaties with the Blackfeet failed (i.e., they were not ratified), and the southern part of Blackfeet Reservation was moved north by executive order in 1874, with considerable loss of territory. The end of the 1870s and the 1880s were desperate times for the Blackfeet. The slaughter of the buffalo, and their disappearance in the late 1880s, had grave repercussions for them.

The pace of activity in and around Glacier increased during the 1880s, perhaps as a result of the increased interest in the northern mountains caused by Yellowstone

---

[156]Donald H. Robinson, as edited by Harry R. Robinson, "Move Toward Parkhood," in *Glorious Glacier: The Early History of Glacier National Park* (Helena, Montana: Montana Historical Society, 1960): 11.

National Park's establishment in 1872. Raphael Pumpelly, an eastern scientist and teacher, made two separate attempts to cross the Continental Divide (once in 1882 and again in 1883) via Cutbank Pass; on his second attempt he approached and named Blackfoot Glacier. George Bird Grinnell first began exploring the Glacier area in 1885, a venture he would repeat annually. He spent most of his time in the Swiftcurrent Valley, traveling with the local explorer and author, James Willard Schultz.

There were two military expeditions through Glacier in the 1880s. The first one took place in 1886 and was led by Lieutenant S.R. Robertson. This reconnaissance mission produced a map of the territory from Ft. Assiniboine to the St. Mary River. The second expedition, under the command of Lieutenant George P. Ahern (of Ahern Pass) was an exploratory mission of the mountains along the Canadian border.[157]

By the end of the 1880s, the Glacier area was well know to white travelers. It had been explored and hunted for at least one hundred years. It had been surveyed and partially mapped by independent fur traders and explorers as well as by the military and by organized fur trading companies. Railroad companies were laying track closer and closer to the mountains: the Canadian Northern Railroad reached Calgary in 1885, and in 1889, the Great Northern (or Montana Central as it was then called) had a line from Butte to Helena. It would only be a matter of time before white people and industry infiltrated the mountains themselves.

---

[157] *Ibid.*, 15.

The 1890s: Exploitation and Preservation, Part I

At the close of the nineteenth century, Yellowstone was a popular destination for those who wished to explore the natural wonders of breathtaking waterfalls, spectacular mountains, and amazing geysers. Closer to Glacier, however, visitors were more interested in natural resources, not wonders. Beginning in the 1880s, northwestern Montana's wildlife, timber, minerals, agricultural land, and other resources were being promoted nationwide. Lands belonging by treaty to the Blackfeet and the mountains of Glacier were not immune from this interest. The transactions that occurred over the distribution and exploitation of these resources indicate the lengths to which the government was willing to go in order to see these resources developed. The subsequent development of those resources demonstrate ways in which Glacier's "wilderness" was compromised.

In 1889, oil was discovered in the North Fork Valley[158] at Kintla Lake.[159] William Morse, who had been traveling through the region, bottled some of the oil and brought it to the attention of the people living in the area, but his efforts did not generate much interest. Morse was not the first person to see the oil's potential use: an anonymous Canadian had been refining Kintla oil and using it to light his house prior to Morse's popularization of the resource. These are the first two men to make mention of the oil seeps; unquestionably, the Blackfeet, Kutenai, and Salish knew of them, and we can assume that the military expeditions, boundary survey parties, and the individual hunters

---

[158]The relief map in Figure 7 on page 130 notes the location of the North Fork Valley, Kintla Lake, and other significant local features of the GNP area.

[159]Full discussion in Jerome DeSanto, "Drilling," 6.

and trappers that lived and worked in Glacier were also aware of the oil's existence. Curiously, however, it was not discussed by any of these groups, and only brought to popular attention by Morse.

The Great Northern Railroad was getting closer to the Flathead Valley in 1891. With the railroad came huge construction crews and a stream of prospectors, hunters, smugglers, and horse thieves.[160] Knowledge about the area increased with the burgeoning human activity and by August, 1891 one newspaper enthusiastically reported that the North Fork had "coal, timber, oil, and the richest agricultural land in Montana."[161]

The "discovery" of the oil seeps was highlighted by the discovery of copper in 1892 at the head of Quartz Creek in the eastern foothills of the Rockies.[162] At the time this land was on the reservation that had been assigned the Blackfeet in 1874. (The area is indicated in Figure 5 on page 128.) George Bird Grinnell, who even at this early date had spent a great deal of time in the area, negotiated with the Blackfeet for the sale of this land to Congress for $1.5 million, though the tribal government had asked for $3 million. The Indian Agent for the Blackfeet, George Steell, "who," wrote John Ewers in describing the deal "had known the South Piegan for some 40 years," said in his report for 1893 that

> the western border of this reservation is the summit of the Rocky Mountains. Eastward from the summit for an average distance of 20 miles the country is very mountainous and broken, and totally unfit for grazing or agriculture. It is of no use to the Indians, as they do not even hunt the game it contains. This section is said to contain considerable mineral [*sic*], and I am constantly having trouble with the whites, who are persistently prospecting it. ... I suggest that a strip of the

---

[160] *Ibid.* The author also mentions "scores of Chinamen" who entered the Valley using old Indian trails, reportedly bringing opium with them for the railroad construction crews (26).

[161] *Columbian*, October 8, 1891, as cited in DeSanto, "Drilling," 27.

[162] Laut, 8.

> western border of the reservation, at least 20 miles in width, be sold and the proceeds be placed to the credit of the Indians as an additional fund for their support and maintenance.[163]

There appeared to be widespread approval in the tribe for the sale (though not for the low offered price). The area included what is now GNP east of the divide (i.e., that part of the former reservation from the continental divide eastward), to the foot of the mountains (i.e., from the headwaters of Birch Creek northward to the international border). Two of the reasons given for disposing of it were first, that no one was living there at the time, nor using it; and second, the tribe desperately needed money for subsistence. The sale was approved by 306 of the 381 male population of the reservation.[164]

Immediately after the deal went through in 1896, a number of miners illegally staked claims. Many of those miners were caught and arrested (sometimes being taken back across the Canadian border). The land was finally opened to a flood of miners in 1898 and over 2000 claims were staked within the park boundaries alone, shafts from which dot the landscape today.[165] By 1901, most miners realized that there was not enough gold, silver, or copper from which to profit; in 1902, most claims were abandoned, and the boom towns that were built around them, like Altyn and St. Mary, were quiet. This experience mirrored events in the oil industry.

Two prospectors and trappers were especially interested in the Kintla seeps, Alph Shipley and Fred Bowman. Bowman (of Bowman Lake) and three other Columbia Falls

---

[163]George Steell, "Annual Report Comm. Ind. Aff., 1893, 172-173, as quoted in John C. Ewers, 135.

[164]*Ibid.*, 159-164.

[165]Jack Holterman, *Place Names of Glacier and Waterton National Parks* (West Glacier, Montana: Glacier National History Association, 1985): 4.

residents spent a week and a half in the North Fork Valley and found oil "of an unusually pure kind" near the Canadian line on July 2, 1892.[166] They also found a natural gas leak, which, when ignited burned eighteen inches high all night.[167] Alph Shipley and four Therriault brothers went to Kintla Lake from Tobacco Plains, via the Grave Creek, Yakinikinak, and North Fork trails.[168] They filed the first oil claim in Montana on July 10, 1892, in Missoula, even though Bowman's group evidently discovered their oil seep first.[169]

This initial oil fervor was dampened by the economic downturn which the nation experienced in 1893. The lack of capital investment forced Shipley, Bowman, and other small oilmen in North Fork Valley to give up on their claims and the situation remained static until the turn of the century. On December 28, 1900, John Bender of the Butte Oil Company (BOC) filed articles of incorporation on the Kintla Lake seeps.[170]

Exploitation and Preservation Part II: The 1900s

Soon after the New Year, 1901, the BOC's capital stock was set and the company filed on thirty-three quarter sections near Kintla Lake.[171] One of the oil company's first

---

[166]DeSanto, "Drilling," 28.

[167]*Ibid.*

[168]*Ibid.*, 27. Shipley and the Therriaults had heard about the oil fields in a story so strange it could be a rural legend: bear hunters from the Kintla drainage, which at the time boasted a high bear population, consistently brought in bear hides that smelled of kerosene. Trappers tracked the scent to its source, a wallow the bears used by Kintla Lake.

[169]*Ibid.*, 28.

[170]*Ibid.*

[171]*Ibid.*

actions was to improve access to the oil seeps, which meant improving the trail from Belton and extending the existing wagon road from Camas Creek to the lake.[172] By the end of August 1901 the fifty-two mile road from Belton was complete and the BOC was awaiting the arrival of the drilling equipment. By this point, other investors were touring the area, looking for opportunities to get into the Kintla Lake area; one oil expert predicted annual revenues from the field to exceed $30 million.[173] The BOC built an eighty-foot derrick at the foot of the lake, and planned to build a sawmill at the head of the lake for building cabins and additional derricks. It took them almost four weeks to haul the machinery up the new road, using five four-horse teams.

Despite warnings from geologists, who were surveying and mapping the area for the United States Geological Survey, that any oil in the Kintla area would be extremely deep and that the chances of recovering any worthwhile amount of oil were slim, the BOC proceeded with their plans.[174] At the end of December, 1901, the BOC's drill at the Lake had cut to a depth of 225 feet and Bender predicted in January of 1902 that the well

---

[172]*Ibid.*, 30. According to DeSanto, there were a number of ways to get to Kintla Lake, depending on the direction from which one was traveling. From Tobacco Plains (present day Eureka), one could use the Kootenai Trail over the Whitefish Range. From Kalispel, people used "the old Indian trail" (or "coal trail") along the west side of the North Fork. If one came to the area via the Great Northern, which followed the present day southern boundary of the park and stopped in Belton, one took the wagon road to Camas Creek. By the time the BOC built the extension on the Camas Creek road, a few settlers, including the famous "Uncle Jeff," had already established homesteads. This road is now called the North Fork Truck Trail or the "inside road."

[173]*Ibid.*, 26. The Flathead Oil Company and the Kintla Lake Oil Company both formed during the summer of 1901.

[174]*Ibid.* 31. The USGS surveyed and mapped in the area quite intensively between 1900 and 1905.

would have to be sunk to 1,100 feet before they struck oil.[175] When they reached 1,400 feet and found only sulphurous water, the BOC decided to quit. They did not stop operations in time to avoid a fire that almost destroyed the whole oil camp–including cabins, derricks, and the sawmill, not to mention the surrounding forest. The BOC's misadventures with oil seeps in the Kintla area and the warnings of many geologists did not dissuade other companies from staking claims in the Valley. The Kintla Lake Oil Company, which actually sank their drills near the North Fork River a number of miles below Kintla Lake, persisted in drilling 1008 feet before giving up in 1903.[176]

The influence on Glacier's landscape caused by the Kintla Lake oil interests did not consist merely of road construction, the building of derricks, and drilling through the earth. Many residents of the area were affected greatly by the presence of oil companies. For example, Thomas Jefferson (or "Uncle Jeff" as he is more commonly identified in the literature) was an easterner who arrived in the Flathead Valley in the 1880s.[177] He trapped and hunted in the Valley, and prospected on Coal Creek (thirty miles north of Columbia Falls on the North Fork), making his home by the North Fork. Jefferson was apparently involved with the illegal cutting of yellow pine while he lived in Sullivan Meadows, but an investigation conducted in 1906 was unable to accumulate evidence against him.[178]

---

[175]*Ibid.*

[176]DeSanto, "Drilling," 35.

[177]Jerome S. DeSanto, "Uncle Jeff," 18.

[178]*Ibid.*, 19. DeSanto cites Donald H. Robinson's and Maynard C. Bowen's *Through the Years in Glacier National Park* (West Glacier, Montana: Glacier Natural History Association, 1960) regarding a man named Chisholm, who in 1891 or 1892 cut yellow pine and decked the logs in a dry slough with the expectation that the next high water would carry them to Columbia Falls. In 1960 the logs had yet to move, and they were still there in 1982: apparently, no one could recall their exact location.

Jeff's winter activities are a mystery, but during the summer he was employed as a guide by the increasing number of scientists and tourists the GNR brought to the region. Jeff's most popular trips were from the head of Lake McDonald, over the Howe Ridge to the lakes in the Camas drainage, or up to Sperry Glacier.[179] Jeff's homesteading in the Sullivan Meadows predates the BOC's involvement in the area by several years, and with him in the Valley were other pioneers such as Josiah Rogers and Theo Christensen.[180] One old timer remembered that while Jeff lived in Sullivan Meadow, his home was the bunkhouse of a defunct logging company, so even Jeff was not the first resident of the area.[181]

Knowing that Uncle Jeff lived in the Meadow between the 1890s and 1900s permits the recreation of the lifestyles and resource use of the early inhabitants of Glacier, for his experience is similar to that of others in the area. It would appear that almost everyone was tied in some way to the railroad and the oil companies in the Flathead Valley. The Apgar brothers maintained the first in a chain of relay stations that moved supplies from the train to Kintla Lake. They hauled machinery and goods from Belton to Lake McDonald (across their own toll bridge), at which point the Strom Brothers ferried the goods across the lake.[182] After the Stroms', travelers stopped at Uncle Jeff's for respite before moving on to cross Bowman and Indian Creeks, and then stopping again with Fred

---

[179]DeSanto, "Uncle Jeff," 20.

[180]*Ibid.*, 22.

[181]*Ibid.*

[182]DeSanto, "Drilling," 32.

Herrig, a forest ranger in the Lewis and Clark National Forest.[183] Quite a number of people made Glacier their home, and while inferences must be drawn about the different ways they manipulated the environment, they appear to have been fairly straightforward: logging, gardening, trail clearing, horse pasturage, and building construction, to name a few. These are the activities Uncle Jeff pursued when he moved to "Jefferson Ranch" in 1911, on the northwest side of the Meadow. He lived there until 1915, when he sold the property privately. At the time of the sale, Jeff had a number of horses, geese, a large garden of produce and root crops, and a bear trap in the middle of the garden to catch unwary deer.[184]

The tradition of occupation of the Glacier area was longstanding, even at the turn of the twentieth century. People admired the region and settled there because resources were plentiful. This sequence of habitation includes the Kutenai, Flathead and Salish, the Blackfeet, trappers, and eventually homesteaders. With the incursion of non-aboriginals, non-native species of animals and plants were introduced to the area. These included domesticated fowl, cattle, and wheat. Some indigenous animal species, most infamously bison, were being hunted and killed in great numbers in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Later, loggers, miners, and oil developers tried to profit from timber, minerals, and oil, resources which Glacier's topography and geology made virtually inaccessible. Furthermore, traveling to the northern mountains was made easier by the construction of the Great Northern Railroad, and by the establishment of new towns in western Montana.

---

[183]*Ibid.* Lewis and Clark National Forest became part of GNP when it was established in 1910.

[184]DeSanto, "Uncle Jeff," 22.

Despite a longstanding history of human occupation, and centuries of human alteration of plant and animal populations, the Glacier region was still perceived as "wilderness" by those who promoted the territory as a national park.

The Park Established

George Bird Grinnell is often referred to as "the father of the movement to establish Glacier National Park."[185] He lobbied for almost twenty years–from 1891 until 1910–to have the Glacier area preserved as a national park.[186] Grinnell had spent time in the back country of Glacier annually since 1885. He spent those trips surveying, collecting data on game type and numbers, and learning about the Blackfeet.[187] He was supported in his campaign by the Sierra Club and by Louis B. Hill of the Great Northern Railroad. Both the Sierra Club and Hill were hoping the unique grandeur of the Glacier area would lure some of the increasing tourist numbers from Yellowstone and Yosemite northward to Glacier, although one can safely assume they had different reasons for such hopes. Hill's railroad was the only relatively easy means of travel to Glacier at that time and he anticipated that the call of the wild would benefit him commercially. The failure of oil and mining interests in the region, and the declaration that the timber in the area was good but inaccessible, assisted the park promoters' cause.[188] Add to these circumstances

---

[185]Robinson, "Move Toward Parkhood," 14.

[186]*Ibid.*, 18.

[187]Grinnell himself developed an interest in Glacier because of, and with, James Willard Schultz, who wrote articles for Grinnell's *Forest and Stream*. Schultz' main contributions to literature on Glacier concern the Blackfeet and their experiences in the region.

[188]Ise, 173.

the potential for easy land acquisition, in that "much of the land belonged to the Indians, and nearly all the rest belonged to the government in national forests"[189] and the argument to create GNP was solid.

In May 1910, President Taft signed Glacier National Park into existence. The new park was immediately beset with management difficulties due first to the nebulous mandate of the legislation that created the park, and second, to the practical aspects of administering the park itself.[190] Fourth largest of the national parks, Glacier consisted of 915,000 acres of land comprised of huge forests of cedar and pine, 60 glaciers, 250 lakes, countless streams, an incredible variety of plants and animals (including exotics that settlers like Uncle Jeff introduced) and mountains ranging in elevation from 6,000 to 10,000 feet high.[191] These mountains created another problem for managing the park: the Continental Divide neatly separates the Park in half and this caused many communications and transportation problems early in the century. With appropriations of $15,000 for road and trail construction, Glacier and its administrators were thrust into life.

William Logan was the park's first superintendent, and he steered Glacier through a number of potential setbacks. As the Lewis and Clark Forest became part of GNP, so did its rangers; one man from Lewis and Clark, Joe Cosley, not only carved his name on

---

[189]*Ibid.* By contrast, Ise's comment demonstrates the elegance of Spence's discussion of the park's establishment.

[190]The Secretary of the Interior struggled with administering national parks when no clear mandate on parks existed: Michael Schene argues that the Interior Department was unclear on the whole concept of national "parks," and that this philosophical vacuum was responsible for management problems within the parks themselves. See Schene, "The Crown of the Continent: Private Enterprise and Public Interest in the Early Development of Glacier National Park," in *Forest and Conservation History* 34, no. 2 (1990): 69-75.

[191]Michael Schene, "The Crown of the Continent," 69.

every tree possible, he poached game.[192] Rangers were also responsible for fire fighting until Logan called in the U.S. Forest Service, leaving Glacier personnel free to patrol the park as they were intended. Logan wanted to begin trail and road construction immediately, but by the time he returned to Fort Belknap, where he spent the winter months, his crew had managed only to survey potential routes.[193]

The season of 1911 saw a number of changes in the park. The ranger corps was growing, as was the administrative contingent. Park headquarters was moved from its temporary location at the south end of Lake McDonald to Fish Creek, a rather isolated spot where few people had vested interests.[194] By September, a road had been constructed between the park's west entrance and Lake McDonald. Bureaucracy was beginning to take hold and define the "wilderness" of Glacier National Park.

While Logan was occupied with events on Glacier's western slopes, Louis Hill of the Great Northern Railroad was designing the east. Hill wanted to capitalize on his railroad's proximity to the new park by establishing a group of hotels and chalets on the eastern slopes. By 1912, visitor facilities had already been constructed at Two Medicine, near old St. Mary's. Lake McDermott, Sperry, Gunsight, and Cut Bank were nearing completion.[195] In 1911, Hill brought writers from sixteen major Midwestern newspapers to the park for advertising; Glacier had become an important part of the Great Northern

---

[192] *Ibid.*

[193] *Ibid.*, 70.

[194] According to Schene, when people heard that Logan wanted to build a permanent park headquarters at Lake McDonald, the value of privately owned land skyrocketed–thus the move to Fish Creek.

[195] *Ibid.*

Railroad's "See America First" campaign. Even though Hill's interest in the park was commercially driven, he still managed to help Glacier a great deal. While he, Logan, and other park administrators engaged in"turf" wars, Hill's influence in Washington kept Glacier's appropriations forthcoming, and without major annual reductions.[196]

The next park superintendent, James Galen, whose candidacy Hill had supported, was more amenable to Hill's proposed measures for the east side of the park than had been Logan. Hill presented Galen with a comprehensive plan for road and rail construction for the park's east side. He also informed Galen that rangers should carry axes and help maintain trails, because clearing and creating trails was "much more important for the benefit of tourists than what the Rangers might be doing now."[197] Galen seems to have disregarded this advice because in 1914 Hill chastised him for not using his rangers to maintain trails between camps properly.[198]

In 1914, Galen was replaced in the Superintendent's office by Samuel Ralston, Hill was complaining that he had already spent over $1 million in the park on tourist facilities, and the park was still suffering with inadequate staff. Ralston wanted to proceed with Galen's (and Logan's) plans of building a road around Lake McDonald, which he thought ideally would be continued over the Continental Divide. When Stephen Mather, the head of the newly created National Park Service, visited Glacier in 1916, he helped

---

[196]*Ibid.*, 71. Congress was reluctant to spend federal money in a national park that still had many private land owners. The park was working to buy land from these owners, but it took time: land was still held privately in the park until 1958, when the owners of Uncle Jeff's homestead sold the property–80 acres–to the park.

[197]*Ibid.*

[198]*Ibid.*

bring these projects closer to reality. Mather himself bought 160 acres of land close to Apgar and donated it to the park for their new headquarters. He also gave his approval to constructing a road that would cross the Continental Divide.[199] Mather's commitment to upholding the NPS mandate effectively ended Hill's proprietary hold on the east side of the park.[200]

Agnes Laut was a writer who visited the Park in 1926, and her observations of the park that year are significant.[201] By 1926, there were four entrances to the park. One could travel by car from all directions, and by rail from the east, west, and south. Highways now crisscrossed the park. Laut says that "a few years ago" there were only 18,000 visitors per year, but that figure had skyrocketed to 50,000 by 1926.[202] Laut wrote of Glacier's excellent fire fighting capabilities, perhaps with a mind to the fires that swept the park in 1918-19; part of those firefighting measures were the posting of rangers at lookouts. The government also kept Two Medicine Lake stocked with trout, with a limit of twelve fish per day, and any fish smaller than six inches was to be thrown back.[203]

While Glacier was certainly becoming a more visitor-friendly park, most of Laut's statements concerning the perfection of Glacier's tourist facilities can be taken as hyperbole. Just a few short years after Laut wrote about the park, over a thousand young men were employed in Glacier by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The Corps

---

[199]This would be Going-to-the-Sun Road, completed in 1933.

[200]Schene, 73.

[201]See Laut's *Enchanted Trails of Glacier National Park*.

[202]Laut, 14.

[203]*Ibid.*, 38-39.

had been created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933 in order to alleviate two major crises: youth unemployment resulting from the Great Depression; and dwindling forest resources.[204] The CCC therefore provided work for young men, primarily in forests and the national parks across the nation. In June 1933, over twelve hundred CCC recruits arrived in Glacier.[205] Six years later the park's superintendent, Eivind T. Scoyen, told the director of the national park service that the Corps had enabled Glacier's administration to initiate and complete plans of work that previously they had only been able to talk about.[206]

CCC recruits were trained by the army, but once within the park they were monitored closely by rangers who ensured that the men were not damaging natural features of the park.[207] Each camp had experts to guide the work of the recruits: history and wildlife technicians, foresters, landscape architects, and engineers.[208] Most of the Corps' work seems to have gone to the construction of camp buildings, installing support facilities, and removing dead snags from a large area around Apgar, Fish Creek, and Lake McDonald that had burned in1929. Men in camps on the east side of the park also

---

[204]According to one historian, forests had once covered 800 million acres of the continental United States. By 1933, only 100 million acres of virgin forest remained. Deforestation contributed to another major environmental disaster that affected the nation during the Great Depression: the Dust Bowl. See John A. Salmond's *The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1967): 4.

[205]Michael J. Ober, "The CCC Experience in Glacier National Park," in *Montana* 26, no. 3 (1976): 30.

[206]*Ibid.* The railroad had been losing interest in developing Glacier since the 1916 showdown with Mather, and when the railroad's interest in the park declined, so did a major source of capital, labor, and free advertising.

[207]*Ibid.*, 33.

[208]Salmond, 87.

cleaned up burned areas and graded roads, constructed trails, and cleared campsites. By 1934, eight base camps had been established. Each camp consisted of tent bunkhouses, a mess hall, radio room, and library. Main camps were located at Two Medicine, Belton, McDonald Creek, Apgar, Fish Creek, Sun Camp, Many Glacier, and Sherburne. The main camps were supplemented by "spike camps" during the summer.[209]

During the CCC's involvement, Glacier began the most serious fire control program in its history.[210] Park administrators and rangers designed a complex maze of roads, trails, and fire-ways extending along almost every valley and ridge line. Constructing fire trails was a priority, as were building lookouts and a phone system which connected ranger stations, patrol cabins, lookouts, and road camps. Eight entire crews fought the Heaven's Peak fire in 1936, which burned 7,642 acres. In 1938, Glacier's first trans-mountain phone line was installed: the CCC laid 28 tons of underground phone cable for seven miles over Logan Pass. By 1940, the Corps had contributed 84,000 man-hours to fighting fires.

The impact the Civilian Conservation Corps had on Glacier's environment was enormous. By 1939, recruits had cleared over five thousand acres of fire-killed timber, and constructed one sawmill. Thousands of fenceposts and telephone poles made from fallen timber had left the park. A thirty-mile marked boundary swath between the park and Blackfeet land had been cleared, and numerous storage sheds, barns and other facilities had been constructed at Sprague Creek, Avalanche Creek, Many Glacier, and St.

---

[209]Ober, 34. Spike camps were located at Walton, Anaconda Creek, Bowman Lake, Round Prairie, East Glacier, Logan Pass, Cut Bank, and Nyack.

[210]*Ibid.*, 35.

Mary campgrounds. The Corps also built bridges, stocked lakes with fish, planted trees, and helped protect forests from blister rust. These activities in Glacier were repeated in national parks, forests, and other areas across the country where the CCC was involved. Despite the conservation mandate of both the CCC and the national parks, perhaps the greatest environmental development in Glacier occurred with the Corps.

Given the history of human modification of Glacier's environment, including Native American occupation and pre-1910 resource extraction, one must question the validity of the "wilderness" designation that many authors and visitors have granted the park, especially in the early twentieth century. Indeed, most human impacts in Glacier occurred after the park was established in order to fulfill the National Park Service's two-fold mandate: to conserve the scenery, natural and historic objects, and wildlife contained within parks; and to make the same accessible to people for their enjoyment and education. A term that could encompass so much human development, yet connote wild, non-human landscapes, is deserving of serious inquiry.

Conclusion

By the time the Corps was terminated by Congress in 1942, Glacier had seen a considerable increase in tourism. The advent of World War II put recreational activity on hiatus, but with the booming post-war economy and the increased money and leisure time it brought to American households, tourism increased substantially. The Civilian Conservation Corps's work not only ensured the park's ability to sustain increased human activity during the 1950s, but it also signaled the end of an era: after the war, the park

would be faced with a new set of challenges and difficulties dealing with increased tourism, human-wildlife interaction, and issues concerning the restoration of damaged ecological sites. Discussing these modern concerns may belong in the realm of political and environmental sciences, but such discussions are best informed by study of the environmental history of Glacier: such study illuminates the issues the park faces today.

The object of this discussion is to examine how action has affected perceptions of land, and the reverse, in Glacier's early history. Clearly, the way early fur traders, surveyors, oil developers, prospectors, and conservationists saw the land influenced the way they used resources. Perhaps the most vivid example of a continuing dialectic is the differences in the approach of John Bender of the Butte Oil Company and the spokesman for the Blackfeet, George B. Grinnell. These two men personify the dynamic between exploitation and preservation, and the contradictory nature of these beliefs. Environments, and the attitudes people bring to those environments, shape the way people modify landscapes, and this is clearly demonstrated in Glacier National Park. Bender saw developmental potential in the land, on the basis of slim evidence. His exploration modified the environment, yet left it as "wilderness." Grinnell believed that Glacier was a wilderness. A quick review of human development of the landscape of the park, and manipulation of it, surely calls Grinnell's belief into question.

Chapter Five: "Regaining the Poise": Wilderness and Glacier National Park

Introduction

In 1893 Turner stated that exposure to the wilderness conditions of the American frontier had instilled in pioneering Americans the qualities fundamental to American democracy. He concluded his argument by stating his regret that officially the frontier era had ended, and with it, the first phase of American history. The government therefore had a vested interest to recreate the frontier and ensure that Americans could still face the wilderness and learn "self-reliant ... rugged and stalwart democracy."[211] As historians have noted, in the wake of Turner's argument tying the frontier experience to American democracy, the number of national parks skyrocketed. Clearly, as has been argued, national parks were created as the last bastions of the frontier, in order that subsequent generations of Americans could experience the wilderness and come away with the values of their heroic forebears.

Literature written about Glacier and other national parks reflects the Turnerian and transcendental theories about wilderness and the frontier. Established in 1910, while Turner's thesis still held sway in academic circles as well as peoples' hearts, Glacier, during its first two decades, demonstrated public sentiment towards wilderness experiences and government agency concerning wilderness preservation. Publications designed to attract tourists to Glacier based their appeal on themes articulated by transcendental philosophers

---

[211]Theodore Roosevelt, *The Wilderness Hunter* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1893), as cited in Frederick W. Turner, *Beyond Geography: The Western Spirit Against the Wilderness* (New York: Viking, 1980): 56.

and Turner: a trip to the wilderness was essential to the good health of the mind, spirit, and body; it enhanced patriotism; it made people better citizens. As the Department of the Interior interpreted it some years after Glacier was formed, "[national] parks are the happiest contact points between our people and their government."[212] The authors of some of Glacier's earliest descriptive guides reflect the attitudes people held about the value, purpose, and meaning of a wilderness experience in a national park.

While the government began to see national parks in terms of science, not just recreation for the benefit of the American character and political system, people obviously still thought of national parks in terms of pioneering and the frontier. Mary Roberts Rinehart, Edith Holtz and Katherine Bemis, Agnes Laut, James Willard Schultz, and Margaret Thompson all wrote lengthy descriptive guides to Glacier between 1916 and 1936.[213] Their genre, intended to appeal to a mass audience, opens a window into how the ideal tourist was intended to interpret their stay in a national park. The authors'

---

[212]United States Department of the Interior, *Two Years of the Department of the Interior,1929-1931; An Address by Honorable Ray Lyman Wilbur, Secretary of the Interior, in the National Radio Forum, Washington, May 2, 1931* (Washington, D.C. : United States Government Printing Office, 1931): 4. In this speech, Wilbur indicates that the government, through national parks, recognized the connection between the government and the recreated frontier. However, by 1931 when this statement was made, legislation surrounding national parks had begun moving in another direction. Instead of concentrating on wilderness recreation for the political personae, peoples' attention was given to the *science* of wilderness. Oddly enough, the language used to publicize the new aspect of wilderness was indicative of an earlier age: Wilbur discussed the part the government would take in the "new pioneering" of the laboratory.

[213]Analyzing wilderness from gender perspectives would be a fascinating study. Our understanding of historical conceptions of wilderness would also be enhanced by an in-depth examination from class and ethnic perspectives. Each of these questions is potentially a thesis by itself, and therefore, beyond the scope of this work.

observations about the nature of wilderness, and for whom it was intended, permit an analysis of the meaning of wilderness as it related to Glacier in the early twentieth century.

Discussion of the Primary Sources

It is intriguing that almost all the authors of descriptive guides of Glacier National Park between 1916 and 1936 were women, especially since the language used in literature about the frontier was predominantly masculine. One only has to skim "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" to note that Turner excludes women, and ethnic minorities, from his analysis. Additionally, history asks us to identify predominantly with male frontier heros: Lewis and Clark (not Sacajawea), Jim Bridger, Davy Crockett, and the list goes on. A few frontier women are recognized because they did things normally thought of as male: Calamity Jane is noteworthy, as are the few women who masqueraded as men to enlist in the army in the West, but the women of the 1860s who successfully lobbied for the franchise are not nearly as celebrated in history. In fiction, pioneer women are treated differently: women are often the lens through which the reader sees the hero, and understands how they have been shaped by the wilderness. James Fenimore Cooper employs this technique in *Last of the Mohicans*, as does Owen Wister in *The Virginian*. This apparent gender bias raises two related questions: first, what is the significance of gender in the perspectives brought to descriptions of Glacier; and second, what kind of selection criterion occurred in the public and social spheres such that it was women who wrote most of the travel literature about Glacier in its early years of development?

Despite the relegation of women to supporting roles in fiction and in scholarship, interpretations of their own experiences in national parks reveal a much more immediate relationship with the wilderness. In those descriptions, several familiar–and gender neutral–elements are present: wilderness experiences would improve physical health, enhance the spirit, and strengthen democratic principles. These qualities would reinforce patriotism and deepen their American character. Women, like men, anticipated an "Old West" experience in a national park: in Yellowstone National Park women "survived holdups, bear scares, dust, overcrowded stagecoaches, and in one case, an attack by American Indians."[214] Like Muir, female nature enthusiasts expected to see evidence of God's handiwork in the wilderness. They hoped for strenuous hikes on difficult trails.[215] Women explored national parks to encounter what "'Nature, high-priestess of God, has prepared for them who love her.'"[216] They "were eager to share in the strenuous life and to experience nature's grandeur in America's wonderlands."[217] Expressions of transcendental philosophy were not limited to the woman traveler, rather, they were suggestive of Thoreau, John Muir, Theodore Roosevelt and countless other men who

---

[214]Polly Welts Kaufman, *National Parks and the Woman's Voice: A History* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 9. Kaufman's book is a thoughtful and very welcome analysis of the history of women in the National Park Service. However, the author's argument that the "woman's voice" was substantially different from men is weak: she observes that women expressed their admiration of natural wonders by describing them in emotional and spiritual language, and contrasts that with one man's attempt to evince the awe-inspiring mountains by quantifying their height. Selectively characterizing male and female approaches in this manner is no basis for determining gender differences in wilderness appreciation; appealing to readers' emotions to evoke nature's grandeur is typical of male authors as well: see Emerson, Thoreau, and Muir, for example.

[215]*Ibid.*, 5.

[216]Sara Jane Lippincott, as cited in Kaufman, 5.

[217]Kaufman, 3.

wrote of their national park wilderness experiences. The women who traveled to Glacier expected to experience the same wilderness conditions as their male companions, and they described those experiences in remarkably similar ways.

As the authors of Glacier's guidebooks demonstrate, women were not met with surprise when they entered a national park. Men and women who planned wilderness expeditions in national parks did so on equal footing; their gender did not exclude women from lengthy trips into wild spaces. However, many female writers expressed more immediately than men the view that particularly for women, a wilderness camping experience was a means of building independence and self-determination. Female authors urged women to "join the adventure" and go camping in a national park.[218] Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony closed a suffrage campaign through California with a trip through Yosemite, during which they chose to ride astride instead of sidesaddle; it was observed by one newspaper that the botanist Jeanne Carr "'practically asserts woman's rights by carrying her portion of the tent'" in that same park.[219] Female writers seized the opportunity presented by their equal participation in the wilderness experience as a means to discuss the larger picture of women's rights.

To focus on the fact that most of the authors of the guidebooks were women ignores more telling characteristics of the construction of wilderness in national parks: the ethnicity and class of those who traveled in those parks and wrote about them. As we have seen, men and women alike shared the Transcendental and Turner-inspired notions

---

[218]*Ibid.*

[219]*Ibid.*, 7.

of the need to preserve America's frontier. However, in order to participate in Anthony's and Stanton's politicized wilderness excursion, one had to be a member of an exclusive group: white, middle-class, educated, and urban. For example, it is hard to believe that women who labored on trap lines, produced indigenous food and material, or kept house for rangers perceived camping as participating in an "adventure." Did ranching women consider riding astride "revolutionary" or simply convenient? Male and female authors are similar in their views towards wilderness and the frontier experience because they shared class and ethnic backgrounds.

The contribution of the effect of gender to the early twentieth century vision of wilderness is an interesting question. To focus on gender difference, however, in the travel and promotional literature about GNP during that period, implies that gender defines most appropriately the social consciousness from which those writers cited here constructed "wilderness." The uniformity of class and ethnicity of all the writers is at least as remarkable. When all three characteristics–gender, class, and ethnicity–are considered in the contexts of the diversity of people who sojourned or lived in the park area, and the total corpus of literature about the park, class and ethnicity appear to be more important than gender as both selection criteria for who wrote and published, and the characterization of the area, in fact, as wilderness.

"The Wildest Part of America"

Mary Roberts Rinehart[220] utilized the rhetoric of Turner and Muir to encourage tourism in Glacier, as much for the economic benefit of the park as for the spiritual, political, and physical health of her readers. As part of the "See America First" campaign, Rinehart was invited by the Great Northern Railroad to portray one of the nation's newest national parks in order to convince American tourists to "see America first" instead of traveling to Europe, as was the custom. She published *Through Glacier Park–Seeing America First With Howard Eaton* in 1916, after touring the park with Eaton. Rinehart began her book by saying: "If you love your country ... go ride in the Rocky Mountains and save your soul."[221] She expanded the political, spiritual, and geographical themes in the surrounding text, establishing the link between patriotism and spiritual well-being with time spent in a mountain wilderness. These three themes–the core of transcendental philosophy–set the tone of the text and are repeated throughout her guidebook.

According to Rinehart, wilderness was the place in which one approached the ideals of spirituality manifest in nature and encountered the conditions that gave rise to American democracy. Rinehart never stated her definition of wilderness, but she did describe its conditions. Contrary to modern perception, wilderness was not characterized by the absence of humans and human artifacts. She stated: "A Government mountain reserve without plenty of roads is as valuable as an automobile without gasoline."[222] She

---

[220]Rinehart (1876-1958), from Pittsburgh, was a novelist whose murder mysteries were especially popular.

[221]Mary Roberts Rinehart, *Through Glacier Park in 1915: Seeing America First With Howard Eaton* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1916): 3-4.

[222]*Ibid.*, 8.

was able to claim that Glacier, with its numerous trails and increasing number of roads, was "the wildest part of America."[223] The fact that she was able to make that argument in spite of all the resource development that was occurring in Glacier is testament to the fabrication of "wilderness" that served the American need for a remaining frontier.

Rinehart made several references to the "Old West" in her description of the park. Having taken the train to Glacier Park Station, she expressed disappointment that the journey to Glacier was comfortable and enjoyable–most likely to please her primary sponsor, the influential Louis Hill. Before reaching the park, she had spotted "[an] occasional cowboy silhouetted against the sky; thin range cattle; impassive Indians watching the train go by."[224] Aside from those notable diversions, it seemed her trip was uneventful, for she was surprised at the ease of her journey: "Was this, then, going to the borderland of civilization, to the last stronghold of the Old West?"[225] That Glacier was seen as a frontier, a remnant of the "Old West," is certain.[226]

Rinehart claimed that her traveling companions came to the park "blasé, feeble-muscled, uncertain and effete Easterners" and left as "philosophers and sportsmen."[227] She made no difference between the male and female participants of the trip in this

---

[223]*Ibid.*, 6.

[224]*Ibid.*, 14.

[225]*Ibid.*, 13.

[226]This is one more example of how ethnic-specific and class-oriented was the definition of wilderness and a frontier experience. Whose "Old West" was Rinehart talking about? Certainly, she had the perspective of one who never experienced the relation of the "Old West" in any of its permutations, be they that of pioneer, immigrant, Native, or laborer. Rinehart's "Old West" is as much a fiction as *The Virginian.*

[227]Rinehart, 74-75.

assessment. However, she stressed the importance of wilderness experiences for women. Having successfully negotiated on horseback a perilous pass, she said "[t]here was a man riding behind me. When it was all over, he shook my hand."[228] In another passage she discussed themes of gender, class, and wilderness, as a young woman recovered from a particularly harrowing horseback ride.

> The nervous woman who had never been on a horse before was cinching her own saddle and looking back and up [the mountain]. The saddle tightened, she sat down and emptied her riding boots of a few pieces of rock. Her silk stockings were in tatters. 'I feel as though my knees will never meet again,' she said reflectively. 'But I'm so swollen with pride and joy that I could shriek.'[229]

In Rinehart's view, going to Glacier will not only save your soul, but make you tough, western, and equal.

Rinehart advised her readers to "throw off the impedimenta of civilization."[230] She said to go "West" and to "[r]ide slowly, not to startle the wild things. Throw out your chest and breathe; [l]et the summer rains fall on your upturned face and wash away the memory of all that is false and petty and cruel."[231] To Rinehart, a trip to Glacier was a trip to the "Old West," a place where one's spirit and body could be renewed through experiencing the wilderness. Never mind that the "wilderness" was being encroached upon by roads–a luxury that the pioneers Rinehart and her companions emulated did not have–and that the Old West wilderness she wrote of never really existed in Glacier. For,

---

[228] *Ibid.*, 18.

[229] *Ibid.*, 23-24.

[230] *Ibid.*, 24-25.

[231] *Ibid.*

as Rinehart noted in the last pages of her book, the Old West was gone, despite the silhouetted cowboys and impassive Indians that watched her train go by.[232] All that remained of the West were stages like Glacier, where the past, as the wilderness, could be created.

"A Great Playground"

In their1917 publication, Mathilde Edith Holtz and Katharine Bemis[233] stated that the government had a responsibility to preserve lands for the edification of the citizen.[234] In *Glacier National Park–Its Trails and Treasures* they do not speak of preserving wilderness for its own sake. Nor do they argue that a preserved landscape offered a unique opportunity to observe wild flora and fauna in their natural habitat. Their vision of national park wilderness is quite different from Rinehart's. However, one theme remains the same: the education and pleasure the citizen derived from touring an area such as Glacier was primarily psychological and spiritual, albeit with physical benefits.

---

[232]This brings to mind William Cronon's argument (discussed in Chapter Two) that wilderness represents an "escape from history." He argues that the language people used to describe wilderness was typically spiritual, such as calling a place "God's handiwork" or "nature's little paradise" (see Chapter Two and Cronon's article, "The Trouble With Wilderness"). In addition to arguing that Glacier, and by implication other national parks, are all that remain of the "Old West," Rinehart utilizes biblical allusion in one passage of her book to reinforce the timelessness of Glacier: she and her companions have a picnic on a ledge "where all the kingdoms of the earth seemed spread out before us" (39).

[233]Biographical information about these authors is not readily available. Their other publications in the early decades of the twentieth century dealt with pedagogy and school curriculum.

[234]Holtz and Bemis, *Glacier National Park*, vii.

In the writings of Holtz and Bemis, creating a national park was a congressional act of patriotism; touring them was therefore an individual act of patriotism. More important, however, was the impact of wild landscapes on the human psyche: "[t]he human mind and heart long for visions of the sublime and an opportunity for intimacy with the great features of the natural world."[235] These scenic features "fill the tourist with vigour, with a deeper love of life and nature, and with a purer and more healthy mind," which increased one's "power for efficiency."[236] The impact of Glacier's landscape on Holtz and Bemis is in fact very similar to the impact of the West on Turner's pioneering Americans: increased integrity, self-reliance, strength.

Holtz and Bemis called several places in Glacier wild but they never defined the park as wilderness. Their selective use–and general avoidance–of the term offers insight on the contemporary definition of the term. Unlike Rinehart, who called Glacier "the wildest part of America," and who complained that "park" was too civilized a concept,[237] Holtz and Bemis called Glacier "a great play-ground."[238] While Rinehart camped under the stars and traveled Glacier on horseback, Holtz and Bemis stayed in chalets during their stay in the park. They defended their choice of habitation:

> True, some who are looking for a wilderness in their visit to this great play-ground, and who carry their "hotels" in a "rucksack" on their backs, will consider these accommodations an unwelcome luxury and an unnecessary comfort, if not a sacrilege. But in every play-ground are there not those

---

[235] *Ibid.*

[236] *Ibid.*, 19.

[237] Rinehart, 5.

[238] *Ibid.*, 29.

> who care only to look on, as well as those who play for all there is in the game? So here in Glacier National Park.[239]

Was wilderness a state of mind to Holtz and Bemis? It would seem so, as they were able to take the values that Rinehart declared wilderness imparted, as they witnessed "Nature, so wild, beautiful, and rugged,"[240] and felt "soul-satisfied" even though they stayed at a chalet.[241]

Even though Holtz and Bemis called Glacier a playground and Rinehart the wilderness, the stories they told of their experiences are so similar they could have been written by the same person. The young woman who told Rinehart she could shriek for joy at having survived an arduous trail ride had something in common with Holtz and Bemis who "gloried in their courage" after a long day in the saddle.[242] The authors stated "the longing to traverse those wild and picturesque regions intensifies the longer he lives in the centres of civilisation and the artificial environment of a modern life."[243] For in Glacier, "one meets Nature face to face and regains faith in God and man."[244]

---

[239] *Ibid.* Perhaps Holtz and Bemis were members of the party Rinehart saw at Lake McDonald chalet, a group "dressed in civilized raiment, people who looked at us and our shabby riding clothes with a disdain not unmixed with awe" (Rinehart, 60-61).

[240] *Ibid.*, 51.

[241] *Ibid.*, 66.

[242] *Ibid.*, 85.

[243] *Ibid.*, 86.

[244] *Ibid.*, 108.

"Woodland Wilderness"

Agnes C. Laut's[245] *Enchanted Trails of Glacier National Park* represents a reconciliation of the views of Rinehart and Holtz and Bemis.[246] While she praised Glacier as "a wilderness of forested mountain beauty,"[247] she also criticized the "bird of passage transient ... who wants everything left a wild wilderness."[248] In Laut's mind, the ideal wilderness existed on a point along a spectrum: far–but not too far–from civilization. Like the authors discussed above, Laut's wilderness is imbued with the fundamentals of transcendental philosophy and Turnerian rhetoric.[249]

Laut believed that the average tourist went to Glacier for something more than the physical geography. She described a spiritual landscape that visitors to Glacier could experience, if they would expand the range of their "inner eye."[250] Even when she delivered basic guidebook information she managed to elevate mundane experiences to a higher level: "[the] motors can convey only to the portals of the mystic temples–never behind the veil of the holy of holies."[251] She also described how she had walked through a dense, dark, forest, to emerge in bright sunlight at the end of the trail, exclaiming "here's

---

[245]A Winnipeger, Laut (1877-1936) wrote extensively in Western American and Canadian history, especially about early European exploration of the American West.

[246]Laut, *Enchanted Trails of Glacier Park.*

[247]*Ibid.*, 18.

[248]*Ibid.*,127.

[249]Roderick Nash is the foremost authority on this subject. It is interesting to see how accurately the authors discussed in this chapter reflect Nash's arguments.

[250]Laut, 7.

[251]*Ibid.*, 16.

sunlight ... here's freedom."[252] Of her time in the park, Laut said that "[i]t was a curious sensation of being *in* the world yet walled *away* from the turmoil of the world by the encircling peace of the majestic mountains."[253]

Laut offered insight into the West as well by comparing it to the East. She made several statements about the inappropriateness of eastern architecture and behavior in Glacier's landscape. Equating the East with civilization, Laut saw in Glacier Eastern characters who tried to live up to their expectations of the "Wild West" and she ridiculed them for their brash behavior.[254] She met an Eastern archeologist who could not understand the "senseless gyrations" of the Blackfeet dancers providing entertainment for the tourists. Later he became enlightened to the dancers' purpose: "[t]he Indians were there so he could study the types and symbols from a life that is passing forever."[255] Laut approved of the fact that Glacier was preserving the Blackfeet for the white tourists' benefit, seeing the natives as living museum exhibits, not as autonomous members of a dynamic culture, for they were a glimpse of the West as it once was. In this, and in her description of one of her Glacier guides as "a son of the wilds, a real movie hero," Laut's views of the West seem as distorted, as fabricated, as those of the other authors being discussed here.

Laut illustrated that whether you believed it was wilderness or whether it was a playground, Glacier and other national parks were for "play–to be left alone as wild and

---

[252]*Ibid*, 148.

[253]*Ibid.*, 24. Emphasis is Laut's.

[254]*Ibid.*, 123.

[255]*Ibid.*, 21.

primeval as possible with due regard to the public's playground."[256] Parks should have roads, trails, bridle paths, and camps, to make the wilderness accessible to people. In her book, Laut makes this connection between wilderness and national parks–wilderness was not preserved for its own sake, but was set aside so people could leave civilization and approach spiritual truths, and experience what was left of the "Old West."

The History of Our People

Like Rinehart, James Willard Schultz[257] wrote as an advocate of park interests, albeit from a different perspective. Schultz was a liaison with the Blackfeet who had resided in northern Montana, and whose allocation of reservation land had included part of the area that was set aside as Glacier Park.[258] Schultz' *Signposts of Adventure: Glacier National Park as the Indians Know It* was published the same year as Laut's book, and concerned the Blackfeet's petition to replace white place names in the park with original Blackfeet names. Comparing Laut's and Schultz' treatment of the Blackfeet in Glacier demonstrates how culturally mediated the definition of wilderness was in early twentieth century America.

---

[256]*Ibid.*, 179.

[257]Schultz (1859-1947), a wealthy New Yorker, came to Fort Benton, Montana, in 1877, and married a South Piegan woman. His prolific writing career–juvenile and adventure fiction and history–began in the early 1900s with an account of his affiliation with the Blackfeet.

[258]In addition to his study of Yosemite National Park and the native inhabitants of the park, Mark David Spence has done interesting work involving the Blackfeet, Glacier, and wilderness ideals: his articles have been discussed in Chapter Two.

Schultz was told by the Blackfeet elders with whom he spoke that the Blackfeet names for places in Glacier "were, in a way, the history of our people."[259] Glacier ceased to be timeless and became a peoples' historic home, contrary to the way urban, middle-class white American tourists described it.[260] Those who read Schultz' description of Blackfeet names and the stories that inspired them quickly learned that Glacier had been a very human place before the government declared it a wilderness playground in 1910. Replacing Blackfeet names with white ones had removed First Nations identity with the landscape, and their connection to it, and gave further evidence to middle class tourists that history began with their arrival. Glacier–or the tourist's conception of it–like many other national parks was free from history.

Schultz elaborated Blackfeet legends and their history in the region with each place name he restored on paper. Each "signpost of adventure" demonstrated that Glacier was a well-known region to the Blackfeet, and certainly no wilderness to them. That subsequent restoration to Blackfeet names occurred amid protests (led, predictably, by those with features named after them) indicated the extent to which Glacier had been fabricated as wilderness by and for Euro-American middle-class urbanites. Laut demonstrated that there was a place for the Blackfeet in Glacier, but that place only included how the Blackfeet fit into the white wilderness myth, made manifest by Congress; Schultz demonstrated not just their place, but their priority.

---

[259]James Willard Schultz, *Signposts of Adventure: Glacier National Park as the Indians Know It* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1926): 4.

[260]That the Blackfeet themselves were relatively recent immigrants to the southern part of the area is, in many ways, beside the point.

Schultz' writing points to another aspect of the social construction of the park as wilderness, even when the wilderness is qualified as an aboriginal homeland. In almost all the literature about the Park, the Blackfeet are identified as the aboriginal inhabitants of the area. Yet the group with the longest association with all the park area and its environs is clearly the Kutenai. They, along with the Salish and Pend d'Oreille-Kalispel made the first land cession of the park area sixty-five years before GNP was created. Yet the popular imagination of aboriginal history for the park assigned the area to the Blackfeet, and there was no Schultz to construct the Kutenai or Salish into the park myth.

Hiking Into Harmony with the Sublime[261]

By the time Margaret Thompson journeyed through Glacier in 1936, a change was occurring in the way people perceived wilderness and national parks. At the time Thompson was published, the nation was in the middle of the Great Depression; vacations were not necessarily at the forefront of peoples' minds. In addition, Turner's frontier thesis had fallen out of favor in scholarly circles, and scientists were looking at national parks as vast ecological laboratories, not merely as huge playgrounds. Despite these differences, Thompson's narrative relied on many of the same principles as Rinehart's did twenty years earlier: the belief that a wilderness experience in a national park was evocative of the "Old West"; that such an experience instilled a sense of energy, purpose, and integrity as it did

---

[261]I took a little artistic liberty with this heading: Thompson discusses how hiking is the best way to approach the "sublime" in wilderness. It is derived from her book *High Trails of Glacier National Park* (Caldwell, ID: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1936): 79, 167.

in the earliest pioneers; and that the wilderness was vital to renewing one's zest for life.[262] That their message was the same, despite the different academic and cultural context in which they were written, is a testament to the appeal of the frontier thesis and the wilderness myth it generated.

Thompson based Glacier's appeal on the ways in which living the wilderness myth would negate the negative impact of the Great Depression. She repeatedly advised her readers to "escape from the stress of a workaday world," and spend time hiking or resting on verandas in Glacier.[263] This in itself speaks volumes about her intended audience: the employed, or those still wealthy enough not to worry about the economic crisis. She appealed to those who need "to repair frayed nerves after months in the office ... [and] solve the riddle of zestful living."[264]

Thompson noted that the national attitude towards conservation was changing from utilitarian arguments to aesthetic concerns, from the planned development mandate of Gifford Pinchot to the aesthetic principles of wilderness preservation of John Muir. Although the wilderness myth, as articulated by Rinehart, Laut, and the other authors discussed, was just as utilitarian as logging–in the sense that it reaped psychological, if not economic, benefits from the landscape–Thompson called places which she constructed as utilitarian areas to be "highly offensive," the opposite of wilderness.[265] Those who saw Glacier's forests as a means to secure a living could not participate in Thompson's

---

[262] *Ibid.*, 79.

[263] *Ibid.*, 16.

[264] *Ibid.*, 117.

[265] *Ibid.*, 131-132.

wilderness. Attitudes towards wildlife were also changing. After spotting a mountain lion which had in earlier decades been hunted by the National Park Service, Thompson informed her readers that lions must be preserved in order to support the ecological viability of the region, not hunted to extinction. In a statement reminiscent of Aldo Leopold, Thompson pointed out that the purpose of the NPS was to preserve all faunal species and permit natural laws to operate.[266] Thompson discussed the same place as her fellow authors, valued Glacier for the same reasons as Rinehart, Holtz, Bemis, Laut, and Schultz, but defined wilderness much differently.

Thompson said that the national parks were created by the government for the people so that "one may escape now and then from the struggle for bread and butter, renew one's energy, and get a fresh perspective. That one may regain the poise which only contact with nature can bring."[267] Certain aspects of the park mandate may have been changing–such as the policy of hunting mountain lions and other predators–and the Depression may have taken the public's attention away from the national park issue, but wilderness was still there in the national parks. Timeless, unchanging, waiting to inspire as the "Old West" did the pioneers.

---

[266] *Ibid.*, 165-166.

[267] *Ibid.*, 24-25.

Conclusion

Turner argued that the frontier experience was vital to the creation and viability of the American identity. He credited the wilderness with sparking integrity, independence, and faith in American democracy. By 1892, Americans had settled the nation from coast to coast, and Turner concluded his thesis by arguing that this settlement had effectively removed the frontier from the maps, and imaginations, of the American public; the frontier era had ended, and there was no wilderness left for Americans to experience. Even though national parks had been established before Turner delivered his paper, his argument gave the government an understandable and publically justifiable interest in supporting existing parks and establishing new ones: to preserve the frontier experience so the American character and political system did not degenerate. Turner's description of the West's role in forming the American identity was compelling, and became inextricably bound with the idea of national parks.

That the rhetoric used to draw people to parks, including Glacier, remained the same despite major cultural and scientific changes that occurred between the 1890s and the 1930s, signifies that "wilderness" remained the same in the eyes of the people who revered it enough to write about it. In fact, "wilderness" as it was conceived and documented in Glacier and in other national parks remained the domain of those with the social, economic, and ethnic background to appreciate the wilderness myth and perpetuate it.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Wilderness is an enigmatic, complicated concept. Investigation of the idea of wilderness raises more questions than it answers. On one hand, it is a quality defined by personal values and beliefs, commonly related to feelings of being isolated, vulnerable, aware of one's place in the larger scheme of life. On the other, it serves to demarcate protected landscapes and areas largely devoid of human development. A major problem arises when historians–any scholars–use this latter meaning of wilderness to describe national parks and then credit those institutions with preserving it. National park "wilderness" was the construction of educated middle class Euro-Americans, justifying the preservation of their version of the frontier, and we owe the associations we make between national parks and wilderness to this subculture. The study of wilderness is less about studying a region than it is about investigating values, and only recently have people begun to scrutinize those values.

Environmental history is the study of the historic relationship between people and the land. It presupposes that the environment is a factor in human history, a generator of thought and an active agent in the course of human action. The study of national parks demonstrates a facet of that relationship in America. People perceived wilderness experiences–as interpreted through the historic experiences of their ancestors on the wilderness frontier–as factors in the development of the American character. National parks provided a locale for a constructed wilderness experience emulating, or recreating, the pioneer experience by facing the elements--roughing it–by camping, hiking, or trail

riding. Another element of the frontier wilderness experience in the United States was the presence of Natives. In the case of Glacier, that role was constructed for the Blackfeet, even though the Kutenai and some of the Salishan groups historically and prehistorically are more closely associated with the area. The Blackfeet were first excluded from the park, then incorporated into it as remnants of the Wild West frontier. The authenticity of this and other such reconstructions, paradoxically, rested on a supposed continuity with the past: in order to ensure the continued health of the American character, wilderness, as this subculture perceived it, had to be "preserved." National parks were established to accomplish this goal, and "wilderness"–the frontier experiences of migrating Euro-Americans–was created. This formalized a relationship with wilderness and national parks that has characterized their mutual definition for over a century.

This reconstruction of the meaning of a place can be evidenced, methodologically, in environmental history. Investigating the historic relationship that a nation has had with national parks may be a huge question. In the "big questions, small answers" methodology which has been proposed by environmental historians, the relationship can be described through the experiences of individual tourists–small answers. Authors of descriptive guides to Glacier encouraged others to travel in the park for a variety of reasons: to improve physical health and well being; to witness the Divine in nature; to behold the splendors of the American frontier "wilderness." All of these experiences were held to have been formative of the American character and backbone of American democracy. When Frederick Jackson Turner argued that the frontier was disappearing, and implicitly the character of the American citizen and the American political system with it, the

government had a compelling reason to designate, for preservation, places that could be defined as frontier. The government also had a pre-existing institutional mechanism with which to preserve such places–national parks. Understanding individual motivations for visiting parks, and the arguments those individuals employed to encourage others to visit them as well, exemplifies the rationale for visiting parks that reinforce that relationship. As we have seen in the case of Glacier, a visit would include spending time in the "wilderness"–which could be experienced in either a chalet or tent–and ultimately, recognition of the spiritual and patriotic benefits of that wilderness experience.

This thesis is based on a straightforward historiographic assumption about the environment: it takes for granted that the environment has taken an active role in history, that the environment is an agent of transformation of the cultures that live within it. In many ways, this statement describes an obvious truth. For example, many people chose new occupations when they migrated west, becoming farmers and ranchers in the absence of large metropolitan centers. However, environments can transform culture less obviously as well, as we have seen in the case of a culture's conception of wilderness. As Euro-Americans settled the west in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, their attitude toward what they saw as wilderness changed from fear to admiration of the spectacular landscapes in places like Yellowstone. This was due in part to changing notions of spirituality and nature, as well as to the practical knowledge of the "wilderness" gained by explorers such as Lewis and Clark. The impact these environments had on people eventually led to their preservation as national parks. These "playgrounds for the people" helped reinforce prevailing beliefs about the role of wilderness and the frontier in

creating the American character and American democracy. Set aside and protected by legislation which limited development, these unique environments–national parks--changed the way people thought about and behaved in "wilderness."

Examining the concept of wilderness with respect to Glacier National Park has demonstrated that the beliefs which lay at the heart of national parks applied to a small segment of America's population: educated, urban, middle class Euro-Americans. Wilderness, to this group, was defined as places where people were not, where the conditions that the pioneers met were still in control. Describing areas such as Glacier as "wilderness" denied the history and humanity of native groups who occupied the area. It also denied the impact of hunters, trappers, and miners who lived in the region and used its resources. That early twentieth century writers such as Agnes Laut were able to call such a human landscape "wilderness" says a great deal about how they defined the concept, and about those to whom the concept had relevance. Wilderness, as it was defined by the majority, was created, packaged, and managed when national parks were established.

Today our understanding of wilderness is defined less by social factors than it is by ecological theory. The idea that national parks and other protected areas were places where non-human species and their habitats could be maintained was recognized in the 1930s by scientists such as Aldo Leopold. Margaret Thompson incorporated this new understanding of parks in her discussion of wilderness in *High Trails of Glacier National Park*. Today, national parks are commonly seen as places where endangered and vulnerable species are protected, and where natural processes are allowed to occur with a minimum of human intervention, and if not exactly wilderness, one of our closest things to

it.[268] These factors have contributed to our definition of wilderness as places where humans' activities are highly regulated. To be sure, there is an element of going back in time and experiencing the "frontier" whenever we go camping. However, the "wilderness" that tourists are encouraged to experience is not necessarily the wilderness of a preserved and re-created frontier. Instead, it is the wilderness of a patch of fireweed, a squirrel midden, a bobcat, and the biological relationships that sustain that wilderness.

The conclusion must be that wilderness indeed exists, but as a personal, mental construct, not as a geographic destination. When settlers began moving westward into Indian Territory, they conceived of it as wilderness. To the Cree and Sioux, the land was all responsibly occupied. Describing the present day Midwest as "wilderness" may have been a functional descriptive conceit for a nineteenth-century settler. For historians in the late twentieth century, describing that area as having been "wilderness," without reference to the origin of such a designation, and the population to whom the designation was meaningful, would be at best neglectful, at worst, simply and unconscionably wrong.

That wilderness is a state of mind is especially evident in the history of Glacier. George Bird Grinnell was entitled to his opinion that Glacier was a wonderful "wilderness" area, but it was by no means a "wilderness" unless one turned a blind eye to the Blackfeet,

---

[268]Even this is idealistic. In the western national parks of both the United States and Canada, "problem" bears–in the sense that they are problematic to people–are relocated and even destroyed if their presence is deemed dangerous to humans. Naturally-occurring fires are suppressed if they range too closely to campgrounds and highways. In dealing with factors like these, national parks used to practice "wilderness management." Now, they plan "ecosystem management." Though "wilderness" has some currency in legislation and in the articulation of national park policy, people working in parks avoid using the term wilderness as an operational construct, preferring the less value-laden "back country." (Jeff Anderson, Jasper National Park Ecosystem Secretariate, personal communication, July 1998.)

Pend d'Oreille, Salish and Tunaxe. Establishing Grinnell's "wilderness" park called for the removal of the Blackfeet and construction of numerous hotels in order to create a remnant of the frontier. Glacier, as the travel guide authors describe, was wilderness. In the 1930s we see that attitude alter. Margaret Thompson still finds the wilderness in Glacier, but, for example, her assessment of predator control demonstrates an understanding of wilderness based on ecological theory, more like our own than Agnes Laut's or Mary Roberts Rinehart's. The history of native occupation, of hunting, mining, and railroad construction all demonstrate that parks like Glacier were not pristine, human-free wilderness zones. Yet, to Grinnell and his contemporaries, Glacier was wilderness. To the Blackfeet, it was not. Opinion varies in current thinking as well: to park rangers it is often called "back country," while the tourist from Chicago might call it wilderness. Conversely, Chicago may be the great unexplored wilderness to the Glacier ranger.

With so many possible definitions of wilderness, is it any wonder it remains a problematic term in historical analysis? In all of the permutations of its definition, "wilderness" includes the idea of a place that has seen little or no human agency. When a North American national park is described as a frontier "wilderness," even when that description refers to a past when overdevelopment was not an issue, it is a denial of the legitimacy of the perspectives of those who did not participate in the "frontier"experience of the place as it was interpreted by the national parks. It is a description that denies the humanity of the people whose intimate experience of the area was as homeland. Describing national parks as wilderness alienated many people from the "wilderness" experiences deemed essential to the life of American democracy and character. Such

description asked people to believe that their homelands had remained "undeveloped," even "unoccupied"–explicitly communicating that their perspective was not important. The description excludes them even today, except as objects, from one of the theories behind national parks.

Exploring the history of Glacier National Park has revealed aspects of the historic relationship between people and national parks. Focusing on perceptions of wilderness as an element of that relationship allows not only for an examination of the way in which the concept was constructed, and by whom, it provides for a comparison of methods used by different historians. It suggests that environmental history is defined both by method and by the a priori assumption of an active environment, not by subject and era. Ise, for example, examines a history of national parks, but limits the methodological scope to a discussion of legislation and policy. It is valuable history, but it is not environmental history because the land is not an active agent in the processes he describes. Cronon, on the other hand, assumes just such an agency on the part of the environment, and the environment itself is a data source, to be compared with the archival and documentary data he finds in his study. Malin, with an apparently completely different approach, attempts a reconstruction of a description of an environment. He is like Cronon in his assumption that the environment itself is a source of historical information, but where Cronon's approach defines environment-human reciprocal influence as the most important descriptive domain of environmental history, Malin's focus is manifestly on the physical environment. Cronon and Malin are alike–and different from Ise–in a fundamental way. Malin and Cronon, as environmental historians, define a specific place: environmental

history is of necessity and by definition, local, localized history. That may be one reason that in environmental history there is not just the possibility, but the necessity, of looking at the everyday, ordinary ways in which people were influenced by their environment. Historical evidence can be found in the record of people's expression of that influence whether through writing a book or building a golf course. Such local specificity in the end leads to a bigger picture of peoples' perceptions of the environment. Another similarity between Malin and Cronon, common to the field of environmental history, is attention to the written word: historical and contemporary meanings of words are in themselves research problematics. Because this study is defined in the terms of environmental history, it has allowed for an exploration of the broader questions concerning the concept of wilderness.

Glacier National Park's history tells us that the park's environment has played a significant role in influencing the lives and cultures of individuals, groups of people, and even the nation. This investigation of the role that the environment has taken in contributing to the societies and histories of those individuals and groups has also demonstrated that the concept of wilderness is a cultural construct: different land ethics fundamentally influenced the way people used and thought about the area. Focusing on the literature produced by a specific group of individuals who visited Glacier in the early twentieth century clarified one public meaning of wilderness, and concomitantly, the unique role national parks played in perpetuating many of the myths about wilderness. Though no systematic address was made in this study to current conceptions of national parks, relative to the concept of wilderness, it must be evident that despite its conceptual

ambiguity, "wilderness" still has some place in the public meaning that national parks represent today. Few national park historians have examined the theory of wilderness that informed the development of national parks. This thesis presents the first history of wilderness in Glacier National Park.

Throughout history, the Rocky Mountain environment of Glacier has influenced the histories and cultures of the people who called the region home. The weather helped to shape the subsistence and residence patterns of Tunaxe, Kootenai, and Blackfeet, whose use of the mountains, mountain valleys, and plains, varied by season. The landscape suggested trails and camps for groups of people moving across the Great Divide. It offered places to approach the Divine, as the Going-to-the-Sun Road indicates. The spectacular landscape views and spiritual awakening experienced as a result of traveling that route led one culture to construct a trail and another group, later, to build a road; in that sense, it is easy to see how a specific environment can have an impact on the cultures of its inhabitants, and how the environment itself has been modified as a result of the impact it has had on humans. The relationship between Glacier's landscape and the cultures of the people who experienced it was also abstract: the landscape itself influenced the way people *perceived* the natural environment. For thousands of years, Glacier provided groups of people with a home, but was more lately recognized by another group as a spectacular "wilderness" that needed to be preserved. Ultimately, the perception of the region as wilderness resulted in its establishment as a national park in 1910. If the history of Glacier is an example, the environment has played a very active role in determining history, and is not merely the recipient of human action.

A history of Glacier National Park in the recently articulated tradition of environmental history could take a wide variety of approaches. In this work, a narrow focus has been maintained on the role of the concept of wilderness–the public meaning of the term as evidenced in a literature about the park–in the history of human interaction with the environment of GNP between the 1890s and the early 1930s. This same tradition of environmental history could have motivated a study based on the large body of environmental data that exists for the area in the form of meteorological records, biological data about animal population control, and so forth. An environmental history of the park based on examination of old maps of trails and buildings, and one based on oral history, would be compelling contributions to our knowledge of both the park itself and to environmental history.

This study suggests at least two cautions regarding further research. First, the study provides a preliminary caution to those environmental historians who might pursue the kinds of research suggested above: the concept of human agency in a specific place that has been defined historically as "wilderness" is an initial research problematic, not a given. Second, this work itself raises issues that might define further research. For example, during the 1920s the writers who celebrated Glacier's wilderness were mostly women: investigating gender differences in wilderness experiences would be an interesting area in which to conduct research. Another area for research is suggested by the observation that it was a middle class, European, conception that characterized Glacier National Park as wilderness: a history of national park wilderness experiences that takes into account class, ethnicity, and gender would be an enormous contribution to the field.

Wilderness is also a powerful theme in fiction and film, as we have seen in *The Virginian* and *Last of the Mohicans.* The authors of those works provide their readers with perceptions of wilderness, historic perceptions which, for many readers, still ring true today, as is apparent in the existence and popularity of such films as *Dances With Wolves*. Analyzing the representation of wilderness in fiction and film would be fascinating studies.

The perception of national parks as wilderness areas may be changing, but people still equate the "wilderness" they encounter in national parks with the frontier. This study has raised questions that might apply to current thinking about our relationships with specific locales and with the environment, generally. For example, it is a kind of case study of paradox: "wilderness" always seems to imply a relative lack of human agency in a place: how can humans exercise such concerted agency in preservation, and maintain such a definition? Additionally, how can such a definition be maintained while managing "wilderness" to maximize public access? A similar paradox lies in the justification for the Turnerian requirement for wilderness: it was conflict with natural forces that built the American character; how can an inherently conflictual relationship be "managed" except as it is fabricated? It is impossible to have an authentic "Turnerian" experience with wilderness in a national park. Finally, almost all of the definitions of wilderness and national parks we have seen are described in utilitarian terms: there is a usefulness in the preservation of wilderness. That invokes, again, human agency as a paramount consideration, obviating the maintenance of a place as "wilderness."

Figures

Figure 2. Albert Bierstadt (American, born in Germany,1830-1902). *Valley of the Yosemite*. 1846. Oil on board. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 3. Thomas Cole (American, born in Great Britain, 1801-1848). *Romantic Landscape*. c. 1826. Oil on wood panel; 16 1/16 x 21 15/16 in. North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh.

Mid-18th Century. Kutenai territory in Montana was a southern extension of their more northern and western territories. They lived as far north as Rocky Mountain House (Alberta) and west to Arrow Lakes (British Columbia). The South Piegan, from the Saskatchewan River, began to expand southward in the last half of the 18th century. The Tunaxe were decimated by smallpox, and the Salish and Pend d'Oreille who had been on the plains and eastern slopes withdrew westward. (*Name placement shows core territory; arrows indicate claim to, and use of, adjacent territories.)*

Mid-19th Century: Salish, Pend d'Oreilles, Kutenai, and South Piegan. Shoshoni groups withdrew south. South Piegan and Kainah were often in conflict with the other groups, though the Small Robes were on friendly terms with the First Nations of Western Montana. (*Name placement indicates core territory; arrows indicate claim to, and use of, adjacent territories.)*

Other First Nations Groups, 19th Century. In addition to those first nations directly involved in the Glacier National Park area, other groups of Montana, Southern Alberta, and Idaho had an interest in the area during the 19th century and would have sojourned or traveled through the area that was to become the Park.

Mid-20th Century-Montana Indian Reserves and Population Density. Relative Native American population density is indicated by intensity of shading. Other First Nations with an interest in the Glacier National Park area have reserves in Southern Alberta, Southeastern British Columbia, Idaho, and Wyoming.

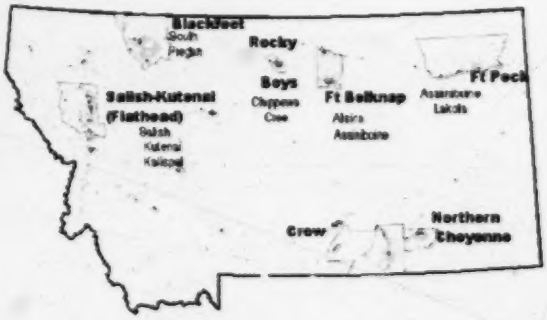

Figure 4. First Nations With an Interest in the Glacier National Park Area, 18th, 19th, and 20th Centuries

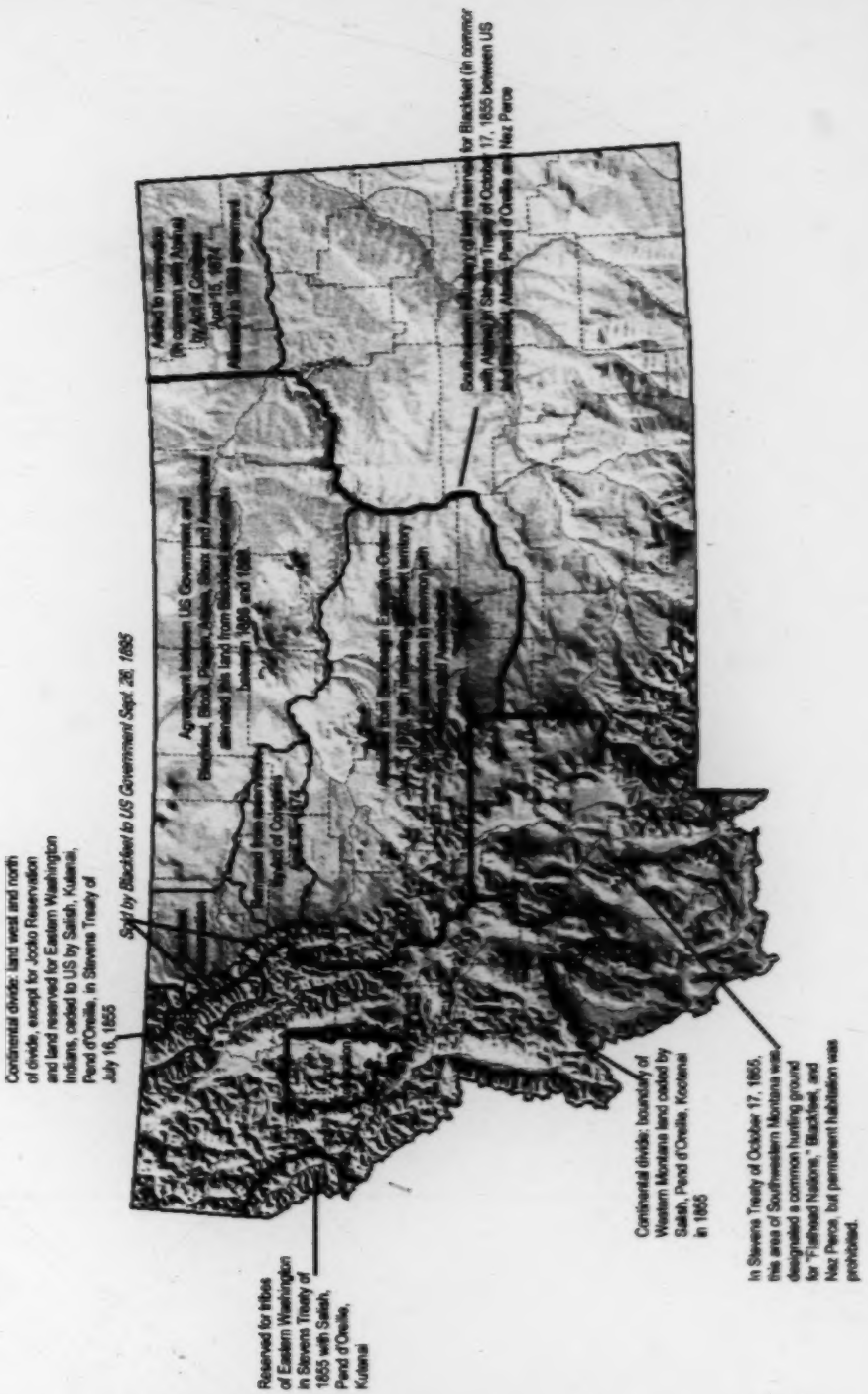
Continental divide: land west and north of divide, except for Jocko Reservation and land reserved for Eastern Washington Indians, ceded to US by Salish, Kutenai, Pend d'Oreille, in Stevens Treaty of July 16, 1855
Sold by Blackfeet to US Government Sept. 26, 1855
Reserved for tribes of Eastern Washington in Stevens Treaty of 1855 with Salish, Pend d'Oreille, Kutenai
Continental divide: boundary of Western Montana land ceded by Salish, Pend d'Oreille, Kootenai in 1855
In Stevens Treaty of October 17, 1855, this area of Southwestern Montana was designated a common hunting ground for "Flathead Nations," Blackfeet, and Nez Perce, but permanent habitation was prohibited.

Figure 5. Indian Land Cessions, Assignments, and Reservations in Nineteenth Century Northwestern Montana

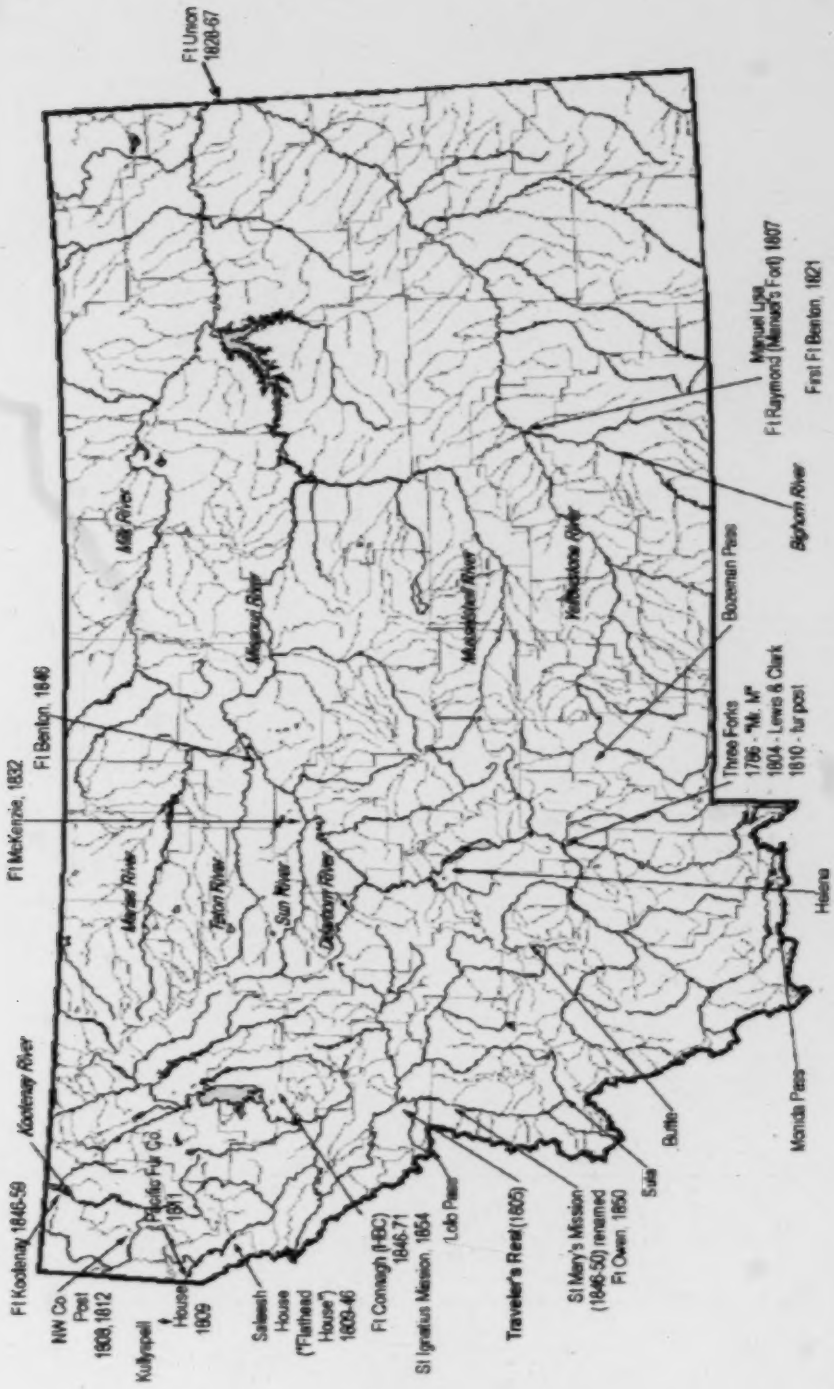

Figure 6. Places in Montana Cited in Text

Figure 7. Locations of Cited Places in Glacier National Park

Credits for Figures 1-7

Figure 1
Reproduced from an electronic file "GLACMAP.pdf" made available by U.S. National Park Service. See U.S. National Park Service, "Glacier National Park: Park Map" [GLACMAP.pdf], in "Publications: Digital Maps," *ParkNet* [World Wide Web site], [14 December 1998], available on the World Wide Web at *http://www.nps.gov/carto/GLAC.html*.

The image is in the public domain, as confirmed by Tom Patterson, Division of Publications, US National Park Service. See Tom Patterson <T_Patterson@ccmail.itd.nps.gov>, "Re: Permission to Reproduce Map (Academic Use)," personal e-mail message, 14 December 1998.

Figure 2
Reproduced from electronic file "bierstadt-15.jpg" made available by Carol F. Gerten. See Carol F. Gerten, "Albert Bierstadt," *CGFA* [online collection of art images], (1996-1998 [14 December 1998]), available at *http://sunsite.auc.dk/cjackson/bierstadt/p-bierstadt-15.htm*.

Permission for use for educational purposes is noted at Carol F. Gerten, "Tips and FAQ," in *CGFA* [online collection of electronic images] (1996- 1998 [14 December 1998]), available from World Wide Web at *http://sunsite.auc.dk/cjackson/faq.htm#wallpaper*

Figure 3
Prepared by Carl Urion. Reproduced from electronic file "pic-079.gif," made available by North Carolina Museum of Art. See North Carolina Museum of Art, "Thomas Cole," *Artnet* [online collection of electronic images] [14 December 1998]; available from World Wide Web at *http://www2.ncsu.edu/ncma/collections/american/pictures/pic-079.html*

Copyright by North Carolina Museum of Art. Permission for use for educational purposes is noted at North Carolina Museum of Art, "Collections Page: Copyright Restrictions" in *Artnet* [online collection of electronic images], [14 December 1998], available on the World Wide Web at *http://www2.ncsu.edu/NCMA/collections/index.html*. Permission for use in this thesis confirmed in Marcia Erickson <MERICKSON@ncmamail.dcr.state.nc.us>, "Permission for Thomas Cole, `Romantic Landscape,'" personal e-mail message, 16 December 1998.

Figures 4, 5, and 6
Maps were created by Carl Urion by superimposing data on the maps "Lakes and Streams" (hd49.gif), "Indian Reservations" (ab9.gif), and "1 km Digital Elevation" (el11.gif) prepared by Gerry Daumiller, GIS specialist, Montana State Library, and made available in the "Natural Resources Information System GIS: Maps of Montana" section of the Montana State Library web site. See Montana State Library, "Maps of Montana," *Natural Resources Information System GIS* [on line map collection] (19 September 1994-27 November 1998 [14 December 1998]), available from World Wide Web at *http://nris.state.mt.us/gis/mtmaps.html*.

Mr. Daumiller confirms that the images are in the public domain confirms permission to modify the image for use in this thesis (Gerry Daumiller <gerry@nris.state.mt.us>, "Re: Permission to Use Map For Thesis," personal e-mail (14 December 1998)).

Figure 7
The composite relief map was created by Carl Urion by joining four separate relief-map images which have been separately created, using United States Geographic Survey data, by Dr. Daniel L. Gustafson, Environmental Statistics Group, Department of Biology, Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana; then superimposing places names on the composite. Dr. Gustafson's maps were obtained from Daniel L. Gustafson, "Greater Montana Areal Project," *Geographical Locator,* [World Wide Web site] (3 December 1997 [14 December 1998]), available on the world wide web at *http://www.esg.montana.edu/gl/gmt.html*.The four maps are "Whitefish Range" (*http://chasm.msu.montana.edu/gl/100/115_485.html*), "Saint Mary" (*http://chasm.msu.montana.edu/gl/100/114_485.html*), "Hungry Horse Reservoir" (*http://chasm.msu.montana.edu/gl/100/114_480.html*), and "Kalispell" (*http://chasm.msu.montana.edu/gl/100/115_480.html*).

Dr. Gustafson has kindly provided permission to adapt these maps in this way for use in this thesis. (See Dan Gustafson <dig@rivers.oscs.montana.edu>, "Re: Permission for Use of Maps," personal e-mail message, 29 September 1998.

References Cited

Primary Sources

Cooper, James Fenimore. *The Last of the Mohicans*. New York: Penguin Books, 1986, orig. 1826.

Holtz, Mathilde Edith, and Katharine Bemis. *Glacier National Park: Its Trails and Treasures*. New York: George H. Doran, 1917.

Laut, Agnes. *Enchanted Trails of Glacier National Park*. New York: Robert M. McBride and Co., 1926.

Muir, John. *Our National Parks*. Boston and New York: The Houghton Mifflin Company, 1901.

Rinehart, Mary Roberts. *Through Glacier Park in 1915: Seeing America First With Howard Eaton*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1916.

Schultz, James Willard. *Signposts of Adventure: Glacier National Park as the Indians Know It*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1926.

Thompson, Margaret. *High Trails of Glacier National Park*. Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1936.

Thoreau, Henry David. "The Transcendental View." In *The American Environment: Readings in the History of Conservation.* Ed. Roderick Nash, 9-13. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1968, orig. 1851.

Turner, Frederick Jackson. "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." In *The Frontier in American History.* Frederick Jackson Turner, 1-38. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1953, orig. 1893, 1920.

Wilbur, Ray Lyman. *Two Years of the Department of the Interior, 1929-1931: An Address by Honorable Ray Lyman Wilbur, Secretary of the Interior, in the National Radio Forum, Washington, May 2, 1931*. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, 1931.

The Wilderness Act of 1964, 16 U.S. Code 113-1136, 88th Congress, 2nd Session, September 3, 1964.

Wister, Owen. *The Virginian: A Horseman of the Plains*. New York: Pocket Books, 1977, orig. 1902.

Secondary Sources

Albright, Horace M. as told to Robert Cahn. *The Birth of the National Park Service: The Founding Years, 1913-33*. Salt Lake City: Howe Brothers, 1985.

Allin, Craig W. *The Politics of Wilderness Preservation*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1982.

Ashplant, T. G., and Adrian Wilson. "Present-Centered History and the Problem of Historical Knowledge." *The Historical Journal* 31, no. 2 (1988): 253-74.

Beals, Ralph R. "Earliest Glacier: A By-Passed Beaver Bonanza." *Glorious Glacier: The Early History of Glacier National Park*. Montana Heritage Series No. 9. Helena, Montana: Montana Historical Society, 1960: 2-9.

Brower, David, Editor. *Wilderness: America's Living Heritage*. San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1961.

Buchholz, C. W. "The National Park As Playground." *Journal of Sport History* 5, no. 3 (1978): 21-36.

Chalfant, Stuart A. "Aboriginal Territories of the Flathead, Pend D'Oreille, and Kutenai Indians of Western Montana." *Interior Salish and Eastern Washington Indians, Volume II.*, Authors S. A. Chalfant, C. Malouf, and M. G Burlingame, 25-116 Reprint of Report to Indian Claims Commission in Re The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Montana v. The United States of America Garland American Indian Ethnohistory Series: Indians of the Northwest. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974.

——. "Aboriginal Territory of the Kalispel Indians." *Interior Salish and Eastern Washington Indians, Volume III*, Authors E. O. Fuller, S. A. Chalfant, and P. C. Phillips, 169-232 A report based on ethno-historic research and field inquiry in reference to the Kalispel Tribe of Indians v. The United States, Docket No. 94, before the Indian Claims Commission Garland American Indian Ethnohistory Series: Indians of the Northwest. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974.

Dances With Wolves. Kevin Costner, producer and director. 232 min. Orion Pictures, 1990.

Cronon, William. *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1991.

——. "A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative." *Journal of American History* 78, no. 4 (1992): 1347-1376.

——. "The Trouble With Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." In *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature.* Ed. William Cronon, 69-90. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1995.

——."Kennecot Journey: The Paths out of Town." In *Under An Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past.* Eds. William Cronon, George Miles, and Jay Gitlin, 28-51. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1995.

Crosby, Alfred W. *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492.* Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Co., 1972.

——. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

deSanto, Jerome. "Uncle Jeff: Mysterious Character of the North Fork." *Montana* 32, no. 1 (1982): 14-23.

——. "Drilling in Kintla Lake: Montana's First Oil Well." *Montana* 35, no. 2 (1985): 25-37.

Dilsaver, Lary M., ed. *America's National Park System: The Critical Documents.* Lanham, Maryland: Rowen and Littlefield, 1994.

Everhart, William C. *The National Park Service.* Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1983.

Ewers, John C. "Ethnological Report on the Blackfeet and Gros Ventre Tribes of Indians Lands in Northern Montana." *Ethnological Report On the Blackfoot and Gros Ventre*, Editor David Agee Horr, 23-202. Garland American Indian Ethnology Series, Editor and compiler David Agee Horr. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974.

Fuller, E. O. "The Confederated Salish and Kutenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation." *Interior Salish and Eastern Washington Indians, Volume III*, Authors E. O. Fuller, S. A. Chalfant, and P. C. Phillips, 25-168. Reprint of Report to Indian Claims Commission in Re The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Montana v. The United States of America. Garland American Indian Ethnohistory Series: Indians of the Northwest. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974.

Grant, Madison. *The Early History of Glacier National Park Montana.* Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1919.

Holterman, Jack. *Place Names of Glacier and Waterton National Parks*. West Glacier, Montana: Glacier Natural History Association, 1985.

Huck, Barbara, and Doug Whiteway. *In Search of Ancient Alberta*. Winnipeg: Heartland Publications, 1998.

Ise, John. *Our National Park Policy: A Critical History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1961.

Karsmizki, Kenneth W. *Glacier National Park Archaeological Inventory and Assessment: 1995 Field Season Final Report, Volume 3*, Contract 290847, Cooperative Agreement CA-1268-19017 between Montana State University and the National Park Service. National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, Denver, 1997.

Kaufman, Polly Welts. *National Parks and the Woman's Voice: A History*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996.

Kennedy, Margaret, Thayer Smith, and B. O. K. Reeves. *Final Report, Conservation Excavations DjPq-1: An 8000 Year Record of Human Occupation in the Crowsnest Pass, B.C., in Two Volumes*, Lifeways of Canada, Ltd., Calgary, Alberta, 1982.

Malin, James. *The Grasslands of North America: Prolegomena to its History*. Lawrence, Kansas: Author, 1948.

Malouf, Carling. "Economy and Land Use by the Indians of Western Montana." *Interior Salish and Eastern Washington Indians, Volume II.*, Authors S. A. Chalfant, C. Malouf, and M. G Burlingame, 117-78. Reprint of Report to Indian Claims Commission in Re The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Montana v. The United States of America Garland American Indian Ethnohistory Series: Indians of the Northwest. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974.

McCloskey, Maxine E., and James P. Gilligan, Eds. *Wilderness and the Quality of Life.* San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1969.

Merchant, Carolyn. "Ecological Revolutions." *Major Problems in American Environmental History: Documents and Essays.* Ed. Carolyn Merchant, 22-31. Toronto: D.C. Heath and Co., 1993.

Nash, Roderick. "Path to Preservation." *Wilderness* 48, no. 165 (1985): 5-12.

——. *Wilderness and the American Mind.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967.

Ober, Michael J. "The CCC Experience in Glacier National Park." *Montana* 26, no. 3 (1976): 30-39.

Parks Canada. "Chapter 11: Human History." Waterton Resource Guide, 1997. Waterton Lakes, Alberta: Parks Canada. 11.1-11.20.

Phillips, Paul C. "History of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation." *Interior Salish and Eastern Washington Indians, Volume III*, Authors E. O. Fuller, S. A. Chalfant, and P. C. Phillips, 233-306. Indian Claims Commission Docket No. 61, Petitioner's Exhibit 1. Garland American Indian Ethnohistory Series: Indians of the Northwest. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974.

Reeves, B. O. K. *Oldman River Dam Phase II Archaeological and Historical Resources Inventory and Assessment. Volume II: Prehistoric Sites*. Lifeways of Canada, Calgary, Alberta, 1986.

Reeves, Brian O. K. *Glacier National Park Archaeological Inventory 1993 Field Season Final Report*, Contract 290847, Cooperative Agreement CA-1268-19017 between Montana State University and the National Park Service. National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, Denver, 1995.

——. *Glacier National Park Archaeological Inventory: 1994 Field Season Final Report, Volume 1*, Contract 290847, Cooperative Agreement CA-1268-19017 between Montana State University and the National Park Service. National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, Denver, 1997.

——. *Glacier National Park Archaeological Inventory and Assessment: 1994 Field Season Final Report, Volume 1*, Contract 290847, Cooperative Agreement CA-1268-19017 between Montana State University and the National Park Service. National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, Denver, 1996.

Richardson, Elmo R. *The Politics of Conservation: Crusades and Controversies 1897-1913*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1962.

Robinson, Donald H. as edited by Robinson, Harry R. "Move Toward Parkhood." *Glorious Glacier: The Early History of Glacier National Park.* Montana Heritage Series No. 9. Helena, Montana: Montana Historical Society, 1960: 10-23.

Robinson, Donald H., and Maynard C. Bowen. *Through the Years in Glacier National Park*. West Glacier, Montana: Glacier Natural History Association, 1960.

Runte, Alfred. *National Parks: The American Experience*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979.

——. *Yosemite: The Embattled Wilderness*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990.

Salmond, John A. *The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1967.

Sax, Joseph L. *Mountains Without Handrails: Reflections on the National Parks*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1980.

Schene, Michael. "The Crown of the Continent: Private Enterprise and Public Interest in the Early Development of Glacier National Park." *Forest and Conservation History* 34, no. 2 (1990): 69-75.

Sellars, Richard West. "Manipulating Nature's Paradise: National Park Management Under Stephen T. Mather, 1916-1929." *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 43, no. 2 (1993): 3-13.

——. "The Roots of National Park Management." *Journal of Forestry* 90, no. 1 (1992): 16-19.

——. "Science or Scenery? A Conflict of Values in National Park Management." *Wilderness* 52, no. 185 (1989): 30-38.

Shankland, Robert. *Steve Mather of the National Parks*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970.

Shortt, Mack. *Glacier National Park Archaeological Inventory and Assessment: 1994 Field Season Final Report, Volume 2*, Contract 290847, Cooperative Agreement CA-1268-19017 between Montana State University and the National Park Service. National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, Denver, 1996.

——. *Glacier National Park Archaeological Inventory and Assessment: 1995 Field Season Final Report, Volume 2*, Contract 290847, Cooperative Agreement CA-1268-19017 between Montana State University and the National Park Service. National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, Denver, 1997.

——. *Glacier National Park Archaeological Site Assessment: 1996 Field Season Final Report*, Contract 290847, Cooperative Agreement CA-1268-19017 between Montana State University and the National Park Service. National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, Denver, 1997.

Simmons, R. C. *The American Colonies From Settlement to Independence*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1976.

Smith, Frank E. *The Politics of Conservation*. New York: Random House, 1962.

Spence, Mark David. "Crown of the Continent, Backbone of the World: The American Wilderness Ideal and Blackfeet Exclusion From Glacier National Park." *Environmental History* 1, no. 3 (1996): 22-39.

——. "Dispossessing the Wilderness: Yosemite Indians and the National Park Ideal, 1864-1930." *Pacific Historical Review* 65, no. 1 (1996): 27-59.

Stegner, Wallace. "The Best Idea We Ever Had." *Wilderness* 46, no. 160 (1983): 4-13.

Strohmeier, Gerhard. "Wild West Imagery: Landscape Perceptions in Nineteenth-Century America." In *Nature and Society in Historical Context.* Eds. Mikula Teich, Roy Porter, and Bo Gustafsson, 257-273. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Teit, James A. *The Salishan Tribes of the Western Plateau*. Forty-Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of American Ethnology, 1927-1928.

Tilden, Freeman. *The National Parks*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968.

Turner, Frederick. *Beyond Geography: The Western Spirit Against the Wilderness*. New York: Viking, 1980.

Turney-High, Harry Holbert. *Ethnography of the Kutenai*. Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association, No. 56. Menasha, Wisconsin: American Anthropological Association, 1941.

——. *The Flathead Indians of Montana*. Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association, Supplement 48, Volume 34, No. 4. Menasha, Wisconsin: American Anthropological Association, 1937.

United States Forest Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture. "Table 7: National Wilderness Area By State," Land Areas of the National Forest System, 1997 Data." Web page, August 1998 [accessed 27 September 1998]. Available at http://www.fs.fed.us/database/lar/lartab7.htm.

Waterton Park Information Services. "Waterton-Glacier Chronology." Web page, January 1998 [accessed 14 September 1998]. Available at http://www.watertoninform.ab.ca/r/history2.html.

The West. Ken Burns, producer. Steven Ives, director. Public Broadcasting System and Florentine Films, 1996. Television Documentary Special.

White, Richard. *Land Use, Environment, and Social Change: The Shaping of Island County, Washington*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1980.

——. "The New Western History and the National Parks." *The George Wright Forum* 13, no. 3 (1996): 29-36.

Worster, Donald. *Nature's Economy: The Roots of Ecology*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1977.

Zahniser, Howard. "Wilderness Forever." *Wilderness: America's Living Heritage*. Ed. David Brower, 155-162. San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1961.